



THE BRAILLE MONITOR

Voice of the
National Federation of the Blind

NOVEMBER - 1970

The National Federation of the Blind is not an organization speaking for the blind--it is the blind speaking for themselves.

THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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If you or a friend wish to remember the National Federation of the Blind in your will, you can do so by employing the following language:

"I give, devise, and bequeath unto NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND, a District of Columbia non-profit corporation, the sum of \$___ (or, "___ percent of my net estate", or "the following stocks and bonds: ___") to be used for its worthy purposes on behalf of blind persons and to be held and administered by direction of its Executive Committee."

If your wishes are more complex, you may have your attorney communicate with the Berkeley Office for other suggested forms.

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NFB CONVENTION BULLETIN

It is that time of the year again—time to plan for next summer's NFB Convention! Recently, each Convention has been getting bigger and better, and Houston in 1971 will be no exception. As you know, in Minneapolis this year we had 930 at the banquet and more than 1,200 people actually in attendance. Texas will have to work hard to do better, but we are sure they will. Read the following and you will see why:

The Convention will be held in Houston, Texas, at the Shamrock Hilton Hotel during the first part of July. Please note that the schedule is slightly different from that of the past few years. Most of the delegates will probably arrive on Saturday, July 3, or Sunday, July 4. Registration will begin on Sunday morning. The Executive Committee meeting (open to all) will occur on Monday morning at which all states should be represented. In fact, Monday should be regarded as a full-fledged business day of the Convention, and the various committee meetings should be attended by all.

The first general business session will begin on Tuesday morning, July 6. The banquet will occur on Thursday evening, July 8, and the tour will occur Wednesday afternoon, July 7. The Convention will adjourn at 5:00 P.M. on Friday afternoon, July 9.

HOTEL

The Shamrock Hilton Hotel is one of the best we have ever had. Its rooms are spacious, and its air-conditioning is

flawless. It has a swimming pool three times Olympic size (truly Texas style). It has a Trader Vic's restaurant—which, as all connoisseurs know, is unequaled for Polynesian food. The meeting hall and committee rooms are magnificent, judged by any standards. We have never had better accommodations. Even so, the rates are extremely attractive. Single rooms will be \$8.00, and the doubles and twins will be \$12.00. Rollaway for a third person in a room will be \$5.00.

BANQUET

The banquet will be held at 7:00 P.M. on Thursday evening, July 8, and the menu will be good. The Shamrock Hilton is famous for its excellent cuisine. This will be a memorable occasion.

TOUR

As veteran NFB Convention goers know one afternoon is always set aside for a tour to a place of interest in the vicinity of the Convention city. Final arrangements have not been made for the 1971 tour, but a dual package will probably be offered—either a visit to the world famous Astrodome or a tour of the NASA facilities. There is also a rumor that a Texas style barbeque will occur in the evening. You won't want to miss it.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Again in 1971 there will be door prizes galore. Don't be late for the sessions, and don't leave the meeting room. The prizes will be worth winning. Here is a reminder to state and local

affiliates: We ask that you please help us by securing as many worthwhile door prizes as possible for the drawings. We again recommend that door prizes be worth twenty-five dollars or more. You will recall that at Minneapolis many of the door prizes were worth quite a bit more, such as tape recorders, typewriters, and a magnificent stereo. Then there were those \$100 bills at the start of each morning session and at the banquet. It is a good idea to get started now. All door prizes should be sent to Mr. Louie Vinson, 3823 Nettleton Street, Houston, Texas, 77004.

Houston is a fabulous city,

A CORRECTION-AND AN APOLOGY

The September, 1970 issue of *The Braille Monitor* carried a list of the NFB Officers and Board Members-July, 1970. In listing the members of the Executive Committee, the name of William Dwyer of New York was inadvertently omitted from the list. Mr. Dwyer, President of the Empire State Association of the Blind, was

unexcelled as a convention site. In fact, those who have not been to Texas have a rare treat in store. It is a land of oil wells, millionaires, longhorn cattle, cotton fields, ranch life, modern buildings, football and major league baseball in the Astrodome, NASA control, and the friendliest people you will ever meet.

Please do not wait to write for your hotel reservations. We had problems last year because so many of our delegates did not make reservations until late in the spring. It will be our greatest Convention. Get those reservations in now!

elected by an overwhelming majority for a full two-year term as a member of the Executive Committee by the Minneapolis Convention of the NFB. The Editors of *The Braille Monitor* deeply regret this error and tender our sincere apologies to both Mr. Dwyer and the Empire State Association of the Blind.

LETTER FROM HEADQUARTERS

9 September 1970

Dear Colleagues:

Ever since shortly after the Minneapolis Convention I have been intending to send you a letter summarizing

a variety of matters but am only now getting around to it. In the first place, since conventions are on my mind, I should tell you about negotiations for 1973.

Early in August I went to Chicago to

attend the Illinois convention, and while I was there, I looked at the hotels. I hope and believe you will like the results. Our Convention will be held at the Sherman House, one of Chicago's finest and most famous hotels. The rates will be \$8 per day for singles and \$12 for doubles and twins. The Sherman House is in the midst of downtown Chicago in a good location and it should be the setting for a great Convention.

When we were in Minneapolis, I said that we would try to have tapes of the Convention available for purchase as soon as possible. They are now ready. Very little editing has been done. Some of the pauses, quite a few of the drawings for prizes, and a few of the non-essential items have been eliminated. Also, in accordance with the announcement made at the Convention, the financial reports have been omitted. Since each state was given a certified audit at the Convention, there seems no point in making available the details of our exchequer to the world at large.

The Convention is recorded on six 1800 foot tapes, dual track, 3-3/4 speed. You may order a complete set for \$20 by writing to me at 524 Fourth Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50309. Make checks payable to the National Federation of the Blind. Please do not make them payable to me.

The banquet is not included since we are having it put on a talking book record. Every person who gets the talking book *Monitor* will receive one of the banquet records, and any one else who wants one may have it by writing to the Berkeley Office. We are having several thousand made, so there should be a plentiful supply.

Word has just reached me that Clarence Collins, our able North Carolina president, is in the hospital, but I have few details. I know that Federationists everywhere join me in hoping that the trouble is not serious and that Clarence's stay in the hospital will be brief and uneventful.

As a number of you know, the associate editor of *The Braille Monitor* has also been in the hospital. Late in July Hazel tenBroek had a gall bladder operation. I understand that the doctors had difficulty convincing her that she ought to stay in the hospital at all, and she was back at her desk working on *The Monitor* as usual before the next month's deadline.

Speaking of people who have been ill, I am pleased to tell you that our old Kentucky Colonel, Bob Whitehead, is making great progress. I attended the Kentucky convention the last weekend in August, and Bob was on hand to preside in his usual efficient manner. In fact, he was reelected president by acclamation.

While I was in Kentucky, I had an experience which points up a problem we continue to have throughout the Federation. It involved Betty Niceley, one of the most able people in our movement, who was elected president of the Louisville Association of the Blind last April. Betty and I were having lunch, and I asked her how she handled the correspondence and bulletins from the National Office. She replied that she didn't, because she had not received any. I have now, of course, added her name to the list of chapter presidents.

I cannot emphasize too often or too

strongly the need for an up-to-date list of the state and chapter presidents. Each chapter and each state affiliate should make it a prime concern to send me the names of newly elected officers as soon as elections occur. The rule ought to be that the information should be sent no later than one week after the election. Such information should also be sent to the Berkeley Office.

In fact, there should be several musts for state and local organizations. At every local meeting and every state convention it should be determined whether every person present is receiving *The Monitor*. The names of those who are not should be sent immediately with the designation of how they want it--Braille, print, or talking book. Also, NFB pins should be distributed. They may be purchased from the Berkeley Office for \$2 each.

As I have indicated, I have attended two state conventions since Minneapolis--Illinois and Kentucky. Both were excellent--characterized by enthusiasm, plans for the future, expansion, and new members. This is what

is happening throughout the entire Federation. I am sure I will find the same thing at the conventions I will be attending this fall. I will be going to Pennsylvania and I will also be going to Colorado, where I will be negotiating for hotel arrangements for the 1972 Convention.

In short, things are as busy as ever in the Federation--or even more so. The future looks better than it ever has. Don Capps tells me that we will soon have a Florida affiliate, and plans are actively going forward for organizing in other states.

Before bringing this letter to a close I want to urge once again that you continue to send items to *The Monitor*. I would also like to hear from you as often as you feel like writing. I always enjoy hearing what you are doing in your area.

Cordially,

Kenneth Jernigan
President

ASSOCIATION NOW TRANSITIONAL; NOT TERMINAL WORKSHOP

[Reprinted from the Publication of the South Carolina Commission for the Blind.]

For more than two decades visually handicapped broom-makers in the sheltered workshop operated by the South Carolina Association of the Blind in Columbia have had but a single choice--either make brooms for a meager wage or be dependent upon others for

support.

But today, broom-making at the Association has become a means to an end for employees who want it that way, rather than a last resort. It all came about early this year when the privately

supported Association and the State Commission for the Blind signed a cooperative agreement that transformed employment in the broomshop from a terminal to a transitional work setting. Now, rather than make brooms just to fill orders, blind workers are simultaneously being evaluated by professional rehabilitation counselors to determine their potential as employees in the mainstream of the State's industrial work force.

Commission counselors stationed in local community offices statewide, send clients to the Agency's Adjustment and Training Center in Columbia. From here, students to be evaluated are transported to the Association workshop where they are assigned one or more of the numerous tasks involved in the broom-making process.

"Making brooms with all of the intricate processing involved and the attention to detail that is necessary tells us many things about the client being evaluated," Commission counselor, C. David Jackson said. "We watch his ability to make major body movements, in conjunction with his work, measure his tolerance to withstand the tediousness of assembly line work, and then consider his awareness of safety procedures and his attitude toward punctuality."

"Since most employers are concerned with the blind person's ability to get around in the plant without hurting himself, mobility skills in the plant setting rate high on our list of items to evaluate," Jackson continued. "Of course, mobility

training is an integral part of the curriculum at the Commission's Training Center, so our clients are reasonably well prepared to travel independently before they arrive for evaluation."

Since the evaluation and training function has been incorporated into the Association's broom-making, production has increased from 150 dozen per week to more than 300 dozen. A large number of these are earmarked for the yearly house-to-house sale sponsored by the State's Lions Clubs. Monies collected by the Lions on their broom sales are used to defray costs of the numerous philanthropic projects that have been traditionally a part of Lionism. Other brooms are sold directly to industrial plants and institutions throughout the State by the Association's business office.

The evaluation and training of a client using the facilities of the Association's broomshop does not guarantee placement into the sighted world of work. It does, however, give the counselor some of the tools he needs to help open the proper employment door for a blind rehabilitation candidate.

In the final analysis, placement becomes a matter between client and employer. Hopefully, the cooperative arrangement that now exists between these two agencies for the blind will add sufficient weight in terms of training experience to tip the scales favorably, and an increasing number of blind South Carolinians will be able to at last live economically independent lives.

* * * * *

ILLINOIS CONVENTION

by
Camille Myers

The place was the Ascot Motel in Chicago, the dates were August 7 and 8, the occasion was the second annual convention of the Illinois Congress of the Blind, and the attitude was one of enthusiasm and eagerness.

Our convention began on Friday evening August 7 with a stimulating panel discussion on Services to the Blind and Visually Handicapped in the State of Illinois. Guest speakers were Floyd Cargill from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation; I. N. Miller from Community Services for the Visually Handicapped; Henry McCarthy, Illinois Department of Public Aid. As a representative from the NFB we were most fortunate to have in our presence Mr. Kenneth Jernigan, President. His remarks were indeed stimulating, as is always the case, and I know that the panel members were greatly challenged by his comments. It was a fine beginning for a convention.

The first part of Saturday morning was set aside for committee meetings which the general membership was encouraged to attend. At 10:30, Rami Rabby called the first business session to order, and Rami, in his usual manner, gave a very impressive annual report. One of the highlights of the report and the year was our new ICB chapter in the Carbondale area, the Shawnee Congress of the Blind; its new president is Mrs. Robert Moeller. We're proud to have our southern Illinois friends join the family of the Illinois Congress of the Blind.

Immediately following the annual report a treasurer's report and a report on the NFB Convention in Minneapolis were given. A dissolution clause was read as a proposed constitutional amendment. The morning session was concluded with an election of officers: President, John Myers; First Vice President, Loren Schmitt; Second Vice President, Don Roberts; Secretary, Camille Myers; Treasurer, Ron Byster. Two year board terms are held by Gloria Cusenza and Fred Bixby, one year board terms, Don Vogel and Rami Rabby.

The afternoon session began with the passage of resolutions and the second reading and passage of our amendment. We spoke of our fundraising program for the coming year. Next on the agenda was a fine talk by Mr. Jernigan on "The NFB and the Role of an Organization of the Blind". The remainder of the afternoon was taken up by another panel on "Reading Services to the Blind and Visually Handicapped in the State of Illinois". Our speakers were Mrs. Benjamin Almaguer, Johanna Bureau for the Blind and Visually Handicapped; Mrs. Frieda Beddoe, Blind Service Association; Mrs. Thomas Porter, Catholic Guild for the Blind; Mrs. Milton Rifkin, Educational Tape Recordings for the Blind; Mr. Alexander Skzrypek, Chicago Public Library, Department of Books for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. As a special guest speaker we were delighted to have with us Mrs. Florence Grannis, Librarian, Iowa Commission for the Blind. We learned a good deal from our speakers,

and we had a splendid time asking them what we hoped would be thought-provoking questions.

The banquet is always the crowning point of any convention and ours was true to form! Mr. Jernigan gave a stirring banquet address to one hundred and thirty-seven members and their friends. We were filled with a strong desire to work for

the organized blind movement here in Illinois and in the nation, and our enthusiasm was greatly increased to make the ICB a strong and vibrant affiliate of the NFB. The banquet was concluded by showing our appreciation to our past president Rami Rabby for the excellent job he has done for the affiliate and by welcoming our new president John (Bill) Myers.

BLIND COUNSELOR SURE HANDICAP ISN'T 'TRAGEDY'

by
Joe Blade

[Reprinted from the Minneapolis (Minnesota) *Star*.]

"Blindness is not the human tragedy that it has always been thought," says Jim Omvig, a rehabilitation counselor for the blind from Des Moines.

"It's a nuisance," he continues. "I'm blind and so what? There's no point in worrying about what you can't be."

Omvig argues like the lawyer he is about his beliefs in the ability of blind persons to live as responsible people and to work as well as almost anybody at almost any job.

Omvig, thirty-five, got where he is by quitting three times during his life.

He quit first when he lost the rest of his sight after graduating from the Iowa School for the Blind. He spent eight years loafing and working as a laborer in his hometown, Slater, Iowa.

A visit to the Orientation Center of the Iowa Commission for the Blind in Des Moines taught him that he could make his way in the world. He quit thinking of himself as inferior.

So he went to Drake University in Des Moines and Loyola University Law School in Chicago, using readers who read written material aloud to him.

It took him eight months after getting his law degree to find a job. Finally he got one with the National Labor Relations Board. He worked for the Federal agency in Washington and in Brooklyn and could have stayed with it for the rest of his working life.

He quit to return to Iowa and work for the Commission for the Blind because his travels had convinced him that other blind persons were suffering so much, he had to do something to help them.

He married the typing teacher at the Orientation Center when he was a student at the Center. They now have a son and are taking into their home a partially blind foster daughter.

Omvig talks at length and with high enthusiasm of the superiority of Iowa's work with the blind, of the advantages of equipping blind persons to compete with the rest of the world and of their ability to work.

Another blind Iowan who supports his argument is Curtis Willoughby, twenty-seven, an electrical engineer with the Collins Radio Corporation in Cedar Rapids for the last five years.

"We're convinced that the average blind person can hold the average job in the average business and do as well as his neighbors," says Willoughby, who also got a push at the Orientation Center.

"It made me see that as a blind person, I could expect to compete on an equal basis with sighted people," he said.

And it convinced him that with his interest in electronics, he should try electrical engineering. So he made his way through Iowa State University.

He makes only minor changes in his work because of his lack of sight. Some things are read to him by technicians, and he dictates notes instead of writing them. Secretaries can read their own handwriting better anyway, he notes.

The important parts of an engineer's job, he feels, are good judgment and the ability to make decisions. Neither is

guaranteed, or limited, by sight.

Blind from birth, Willoughby married a schoolteacher in Cedar Rapids who is about to be certified as a teacher of the blind.

Gary Patterson, twenty-five, is about to join the world of the blind professionals. He will graduate with a B average this summer from Iowa State University with a major in mathematics and a minor in computer science.

He worked as a piano tuner in Austin, Texas, for four years after leaving high school.

"As a piano tuner," he comments, "I wasn't advancing much, and I heard programming was a lucrative field."

After starting at the University of Texas, he moved to Iowa, where he met the girl who became his wife. She works for Blue Cross and Blue Shield and also is blind.

Patterson will look for a job as a computer programmer.

They all have problems, but they all do their jobs.

"The public attitude--that's the main problem with blindness," says Edward Sheppard, a former newspaperman who is a rehabilitation counselor with the Iowa commission.

The blind can be trained to do any job, except those that demand sight--such as driving--says Sheppard, but the hardest job of all is to get them hired.

* * * * *

OPEN HOUSING--EXCEPT FOR THE BLIND

by
Robert Acosta

[Editor's Note: The following was contained in a letter to President Kenneth Jernigan.]

In the past couple of weeks, I have learned that a person cannot forget what our cause is all about, even on one's honeymoon. My wife and I arrived at the Sands Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada, with the idea of spending a few days there. I had made reservations in advance and I did not expect any trouble.

However, upon reaching the registration desk, we were confronted by a horror-stricken clerk who kept saying over and over again, "You are blind. You are blind!" After calming him down, I assured him that he was indeed correct that my wife and I happened to be blind. After regaining his composure, he asked if the young lady at my side was my wife. After quickly going over an assortment of answers, I patiently stated that she was indeed my "one and only". He asked us to wait, and in a few minutes we were ushered into the manager's office for stage two of this zany episode.

The manager, in choked voice which dripped with well meaning compassion, asked me if I had a sighted friend on the premises. I stated that we did not because we didn't need any sighted guide.

He then asked me why we didn't indicate that we were blind on our reservation statement. I told him that I would never do such a thing because I did not consider blindness to be a major problem to me.

The manager then tried to point out to us that this hotel was far too difficult for blind people to handle due to its vast area. I informed him that we had just traveled on two buses and an airplane in order to get to this destination and that a large hotel didn't bother us.

He grudgingly agreed to approve our reservation, but he stated that we were putting him to great trouble because he had to juggle rooms in order to place us near the lobby. I told him that my wife and I did want a poolside room and that we didn't care whether it was near the lobby or not.

After a further delay, the assistant manager of the Sands ushered us to our room. After conducting us on a lengthy tour of our room, he left us alone. When we came back to our room one evening, we found a basket of fresh fruit which was presented to us by the management as a kind of peace offering. My wife and I spent two days at the Sands Hotel. We got around quite nicely and if I have any complaint it is that I went home with lighter pockets after a bout with the slot machines.

After our honeymoon, my wife and I went apartment hunting. There was a particular apartment building which I wanted her to see. After perusing the available apartments, the manager escorted us to his office to talk with us further. Frankly we didn't like the apartments he

had shown us, but we were willing to courteously listen to anything else he had to say. He concluded his sales pitch by stating that in order to live in one of his apartments we would have to sign a waiver which would exempt him from any responsibility should any "other than normal" accidents occur to us. I asked him what he meant by "other than normal". His answer was that one of us might bump our heads or something like that. I asked him if any of his other tenants had to sign such a waiver and, of course, he said no, but that they were "normal". After gulping a couple of times, my wife and I politely left the office.

I hope that I have not bored you

with the above commentary, but I thought that you might be interested. Those of us in the Federation must bear our cross of blindness with patience and dignity. It would have been quite easy for me to tell both parties what I thought of them. However, we chose to politely take our stand and refuse to budge. Not because we were blind, but because, as Americans, we wanted our rights as individuals to be respected.

Needless to say, we did find an apartment and we shall visit the Sands and any other hotel of our choosing. As you have indicated to us for so many years by your own actions, "We are Federationists and that makes us somebody".

* * * * *

A CHARTER FOR THE BLIND OF THE WORLD

The International Federation of the Blind assembled in its First Convention at Colombo, 1st-4th October, 1969, affirms and would remind governments, agencies for the blind and all who work with or for blind people, professionally or in a voluntary capacity that:

1. All who are blind are not blind people who happen to be citizens, but citizens who happen to be blind.
2. All rights under the United Nations Charter of Human Rights apply equally to those citizens who happen to be blind.
3. Blind people, like any group in society, want to think, speak and act for themselves. Representatives of

organizations of blind people must be recognized as the authentic voice of blind people speaking for themselves.

4. Governments should accept some responsibility for the prevention of blindness and guarantee to all blind citizens adequate, accepted living standards within the nation and aim to provide them with the means for a fuller life within their community through the provision of employment opportunities for those who can take them, and social service benefits for all who need them.
5. Blind people should have the opportunity for travel-training with the cane, guide-dog or any other travel aid of their choice, and the

right to move freely in the world without undue restraint, except that which law normally imposes on all citizens.

6. Governments should accept responsibility and make adequate provision for the basic needs of blind citizens at least equal to those provided for sighted citizens and, where necessary, make supplementary provisions to aim to give parity with sighted citizens in pre-school services, education, vocational training, employment, rehabilitation, library services and text books, whether Braille, large-print or on tape, problems of the aged and in general welfare.
7. No blind person shall be denied training, employment, advancement or equal rights of superannuation in government or private employment--professional, commercial, clerical, industrial or agricultural, on grounds of his blindness. He must be regarded for abilities possessed; never discarded for disabilities apparent. Employment is always on the basis of what a man can do; never on the basis of what he cannot do.
8. Though the charity-based system in many countries has brought some benefits to blind people, its total effects have been more detrimental than beneficial. It has resulted in the damaging effects of highly emotional appeals to the public in the race to raise more money than others. The impression of helplessness often conveyed undermines the right and the desire of blind people for

first-class citizenship, and their image of independence and competence. It now seems accepted in many countries that governments should provide for the basic needs of all citizens. The function of charitable or voluntary organizations for the blind should be to supplement these services where necessary or desirable.

9. The sole purpose for the existence of organizations for the blind, and for which they raise their funds, is to provide services for blind people: therefore,
10. The constitutions of all service organizations for the blind, whether government or voluntary, should provide for adequate numbers of representatives, elected by blind people themselves on the governing bodies of such organizations. Organizations of the blind should be consulted in an advisory capacity before decisions are taken on policies pertaining to their welfare. This will ensure them some say in the spending of money raised in their name and also ensure that it will be used for things which they want and not for things which others think they need. These are rights and must never be construed as privileges.
11. More blind people of ability should be equipped and encouraged by organizations engaged in blind welfare to seek high administrative posts in these organizations. This could provide more scope for blind people of ability, cut administrative costs because more of the money raised for blind people would be used in their employment, could bring a

closer specialised knowledge to bear on the problems involved, and provide further demonstration to employers and the public of faith and confidence in the competence of blind people.

12. It is recognised that the seeking and receiving of their rights as citizens by blind people involves acceptance of the responsibilities which citizenship confers and demands. Blind people

accept their responsibilities as citizens in the community and ask only for equal opportunity to shoulder their full responsibilities in civic and industrial life and to experience the satisfaction which comes through service to the community, according to their individual abilities, in a voluntary capacity or through remunerative occupation.

ISSUED BY PRESIDENT & EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS
OF THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

* * * * *

LET'S KEEP THE SKIES FRIENDLY

[Editor's Note: The following correspondence from Mr. Jernigan states again Federation policy on two-for-one air fare.]

August 21, 1970

Dear Mr. Jernigan:

I have recently received a letter from the American Foundation for the Blind stating that your organization has disapproved of a bill that has been pending in Congress since 1964. This bill would among other things give the blind the privilege of travel by commercial aircraft with a companion two for the price of one.

Would you please tell me why you are opposed? I am sure you must have very good reasons and I would like to be informed.

Since on the Pacific Coast we are losing our rail service, I am personally

interested in some form of transportation that I can afford, other than bus. This is my reason for keen interest in a fare subsidy of some sort on aircraft.

Thanking you for an early reply, I am

Yours truly,

September 2, 1970

Dear Miss . . . :

You have been correctly informed. The National Federation of the Blind opposes what has been called the "two for one" air fare bill.

We have not, however, advocated

doing away with the "two for one" tickets on buses or trains. Perhaps I should deal with this matter first. There is sometimes a difference in doing away with something which already exists and adopting something new. Since the "two for one" situation is already in operation on buses and trains, no damage to the image of the blind is done by having it adopted. It already exists, and no publicity is now being given to it. It is certainly true that a number of blind persons (people who are really in trouble financially) do, indeed, benefit from the "two for one" rides on buses and (where they still run) trains. However, it is also true that there are abuses. A number of blind persons who are quite capable of paying full fare for trains and for a guide use the "two for one" tickets merely as a means of cutting costs. Also, I know of a number of situations where two blind people (some times one of them having a little sight and some times not) use the "two for one" bus ticket together. One of the blind people travels as the "attendant," and the other travels as the blind person. Very often a man and wife or parent and child simply use these tickets as a means of having a vacation more cheaply or otherwise saving money, while at other times the same blind person will travel alone on bus or train if it suits his convenience. The public, the buses, and the railroads think the "two for one" is used because the blind person can't travel otherwise, but in these cases the "two for one" is actually used as a means of saving money.

All of this is not to take away from the point I made earlier—namely, that a substantial number of blind persons receive real benefit from the "two for one" bus and train tickets. It is also true, however, that all blind persons receive a

substantial amount of damage from the issuance of these tickets. If it is true that we are justified in asking bus companies and railroads to permit a sighted "attendant" to accompany a blind person without charge (not just the helpless blind person, the poor blind person, the incapacitated blind person, but any blind person), it can only be because, by virtue of blindness, an individual is judged not to be capable of traveling alone. This probably explains why many bus and railroad officials have refused to allow blind persons to travel without an "attendant", while such rarely (in fact, almost never) occurs on an airplane. I myself have been denied the right to ride on a bus unaccompanied on the grounds that I was blind. It is not a pleasant feeling, and it is likely to make one question the "two for one" ticket. This is especially true if the refusal occurs in a crowded station or at the door of a packed bus, with the inevitable reinforcement of the notions of pity and the helplessness of the blind.

Many blind persons are economically disadvantaged. They should receive adequate public assistance in cash from the government as a matter of right. They should not have to ask for support in kind from private companies as a matter of charity. In fact, the National Federation of the Blind has taken the lead in pressing for the adoption by Congress of a disability insurance bill which would give to all blind persons monthly insurance payments. These payments would be substantial and meaningful, would be received as an insurance payment, and as a matter of right. The "two for one" bus and train subsidy is small by comparison and only occasionally used. The disadvantages probably outweigh the

advantages, but as I have said, the NFB has not advocated any change.

The "two for one" air fare is another thing entirely. It first came to the attention of the NFB at the 1964 Convention. It was thoroughly discussed and soundly rejected. I believe the NFB will continue to oppose it. Let me tell you why.

In the first place the bill does not *require* the air lines to give a ticket to a blind person and his "attendant" for the price of one ticket. It simply *permits* them to do so. The air lines have made it fairly clear that they have no intention of doing this and have actively opposed the legislation. Thus, we would probably have all of the harm done by passage of the bill and none of the advantage.

The harm might be substantial. Air lines might begin refusing to take blind passengers unless they were accompanied by sighted guides. In this connection the air lines are usually quite good about giving assistance to blind persons in getting off and on planes, catching cabs, etc. Therefore, I doubt that the "two for one" ticket can be justified on the basis of physical necessity. Rather, I think those who advocate it want it as a subsidy. It seems to me there are better ways of getting subsidies.

As I said earlier, the NFB is now strongly pushing for a disability insurance bill. If the bill passes, the Bureau of the Budget estimates it will put an additional \$180,000,000 into the pockets of blind people the first year. The bill hangs in the balance. Advocating the "two for one" air fare may not lessen the chances of passing

the disability bill, or it may. However, opposing the "two for one" bill will almost certainly increase the chances of passing the disability bill. It will show that the blind are not simply always trying to get and never willing to give. It can be used as an argument for responsibility and maturity.

The fact that the blind are not advocating the "two for one" for the reason that blind persons are able to move about the world independently, can be used as leverage for opening jobs for the blind in the aircraft industry and otherwise. It can also be used as a means of stimulus and morale building among the blind themselves. As we demand and get more nearly equal treatment in society, we must also expect to carry equal responsibility.

All of this is rather a lengthy way of saying that I think the disadvantages of the present "two for one" air fare bill considerably outweigh the advantages. Principally and primarily, I suppose, the thing that is central to me is that where subsidies are needed they should come from the government in cash as a matter of right, not from this or that private industry or individual in kind as a matter of charity. I am more interested in a climate of public opinion which will permit the blind person to *earn* a dollar than one which will persuade some one to *give* us a quarter (or, perhaps, even a nickel or a penny). In other words we must not be penny wise and dollar foolish. I believe these are the principal reasons why the National Federation of the Blind has taken the stand that it has regarding the "two for one" air fare. At least, they are my reasons.

SOUTH CAROLINA CONVENTION

by
Donald C. Capps

The historical city of Charleston was the site of the fourteenth annual convention of the South Carolina Aurora Club of the Blind, state affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind. The convention was held at the Francis Marion Hotel the week-end of September 11, 12, and 13. Festivities officially got underway Friday evening, September 11 with a hospitality hour and reception.

During the first business session of the convention on Saturday morning, the convention was given a full report of the activities and progress of the South Carolina Commission for the Blind. Dr. Fred L. Crawford, Executive Director of the Commission thanked the membership of the South Carolina Aurora Club of the Blind for their support and for their efforts in having brought the Commission into being in 1966. The convention also heard from Dr. F. Arthur Lown, coordinator of programs for blind children attending public schools in the Atlanta school system. Dr. Lown is a native South Carolinian having graduated from the South Carolina School for the Blind.

South Carolina is celebrating its tricentennial, 1670-1970. Charleston is prominently featured in this celebration and convention delegates took advantage of the occasion by visiting Old Charlestown Landing. The highlight of the convention was the Saturday evening banquet featuring an address by Donald C. Capps, NFB First Vice-President. Don spoke of the notable progress and wholesome changes which have occurred

in South Carolina in programs for the blind because of the efforts of the organized blind.

The Aurora Service Award, given annually to the sighted person judged to have made the greatest contribution to the State's blind, was presented to Mrs. Katherine Wolf, administrative assistant to Governor Robert E. McNair. Archie Nunnery, President of the Columbia Chapter, was the recipient of the Donald C. Capps Award sponsored by Ways and Means for the Blind, Augusta, Georgia. This particular award consists of a \$100 cash gift given annually to the blind person considered by a special committee to have made the greatest contribution to his fellow blind during the preceding year. The Jack Morrison Memorial Award consisting of \$50 in cash was presented to the Aurora Center's expansion program.

Traditionally Dr. Sam M. Lawton, distinguished Aurora Club founder, speaks during the Sunday morning session and this year was no exception. This was preceded by a brief musical program under the direction of Marshall Tucker. Chapter reports reflecting continued progress were given by the chapter presidents. Mrs. Serena Hadwin, coordinator of the Aurora Center, told the convention of the outstanding year the Center had experienced. A progress report was given by Mr. N. F. Walker, Superintendent of the South Carolina School for the Deaf and Blind. A panel discussion entitled "To be An Auroran" featured specific information concerning the workings of

the state organization. Members of the panel were Donald C. Capps, Chairman; Lois Boltin, Mildred Kirkland, and Robert L. Oglesby.

The business session concluding the convention on Sunday afternoon featured a report by President Lois Boltin who challenged the membership to greater dedication and sacrifice in the building of a better and better organization. Several resolutions were adopted by the convention, including an important resolution calling for whatever action necessary to retain the present status of

the South Carolina Commission for the Blind regardless of what reorganizational plan is recommended by any group. The following officers were elected by the convention: President, Donald C. Capps, Columbia; First Vice-President, Miss Lois V. Boltin, Columbia; Second Vice-President, Robert L. Oglesby, Spartanburg; Secretary, Mrs. Mildred Kirkland, Charleston; Treasurer, Marshall Tucker, Columbia. New Board Members elected are John W. Potter and James Sims, both of Columbia; Mrs. Betty Bell, Charleston; and Miss Gayle Martin, Spartanburg.

PROGRESS IN MARYLAND WORKSHOP

[Editor's Note: Readers of the August, 1970 issue of *The Braille Monitor* will recall the item entitled "Blind Shop Workers in Maryland Protest". The following letter from John McCraw, president of the Free State Federation of the Blind to Robert Moran, Administrator of the Wages, Hours, and Public Contracts Division of the United States Department of Labor indicates that progress has been made.]

April 13, 1970

Dear Mr. Moran:

A copy of a letter sent to you on April 3, 1970, from the Executive Board of the Free State Federation of the Blind, was received by Mr. George Parks, Executive Vice-President of the Maryland Workshop for the Blind. The letter referred to an article that appeared in the Afro-American newspaper on March 27, 1970, depicting allegedly deplorable conditions, (specific grievances, as it eventually turned out, proved either unfounded, or at the most, distorted and inflated) and precipitately strained

relations between management and employees at the Workshop.

In order to explore fully the disputed causes that have spawned too many soul-searing effects, Mr. Parks requested a meeting with a delegation from the Free State Federation of the Blind acting in the capacity of a vitally interested third party.

On April 10, 1970, for an hour and a half, at the Maryland Workshop for the Blind, a no-holds-barred, a profoundly delving and an informatively illuminating session was held, out of which three pervasive items were developed to an incontrovertible degree of fruition,

namely:

1. the overriding original problems are self-perpetuating, feeding upon a nearly total break-down in communications between management and labor at the Maryland Workshop for the Blind;
2. the management of the Maryland Workshop for the Blind irrevocably consented to meet periodically with labor, setting forth no pre-conditions save that of good faith on both sides of a grievance; and,
3. in the event of an impasse, management and labor of the Maryland Workshop for the Blind

will mutually select a mediator from the membership of the Free State Federation of the Blind.

We, the members of the Executive Board of the Free State Federation of the Blind, and a considerable majority of the dissonant faction among the employees of the Maryland Workshop for the Blind, are so highly satisfied with a significant atmosphere of mutual trust issuing from the remedial concessions gained from management, that we respectfully withdraw our request for any further investigation.

Very truly yours,

John McCraw, President

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ANY FUTURE FOR THE BLIND?

by
John Bilby

[Reprinted from the *Honolulu Advertiser* (Hawaii).]

To try to understand what it means to be blind, I spent twenty-four hours the other day blindfolded, unable even to see light. For six hours I was led around Waikiki by a boy named Curtis Chong.

Curtis is sixteen, a McKinley High School student, and blind from birth. He's one of those blind people who has been able to make a satisfactory adjustment. I never did see him, but I remember his voice.

I met him by telephone through another blind friend, pianist Wayne Borje.

I explained my idea.

"I'll take you where you want to go," said Curtis.

I began practicing the day before. I wanted to get over my shyness about running into things. On a sunny Saturday afternoon about four p.m. I put on a black scarf with heavy gauze pads sewed inside, to fit over my eyes. It was a kind of darkness you seldom even see at night.

From the beginning it was fun and a challenge. Is that a cruel thing to say?

Curtis wouldn't think so.

I quickly learned my way around the house. I could put something down on a table, walk into another room, come back and somehow put my hand right on it again.

A friend walked me around the corner to another friend's house. Later, another friend took me for a drive. She commented on what a pretty night it was. Flash! I was still "seeing" the world outside my mask bathed in the bright sunlight I had left behind.

Next morning, I awoke upon a dark dawn—confused a moment at first, then satisfied and eagerly looking forward to the day. A ludicrous, insensitive imitation of blindness? Curtis wouldn't say so.

With a friend driving my car, I picked Curtis up at his home and we went to *The Advertiser*. I had a tape-recorder with me throughout the day with him.

"Are you a pretty outgoing person, or shy?" I asked.

"I'm pretty outgoing, you know," he replied. "But in class I don't fool around too much. I'm not really shy. I'm not afraid to go out and make friends. I just want to get the grades and get out."

"What are you taking? What kind of grades do you make?"

"I'm taking all solids this year—plane and solid geometry, physics, U. S. history, second-year French, and English. I got practically straight A's this last year."

Almost all his schoolmates are

sighted. Curtis wasn't shy in running down the schools he has attended: "Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind, which is a rotten school; Washington Intermediate, which I think was a rotten school, and McKinley, which is a kind of good school."

For Curtis, the main criterion of a "rotten" school is one in which blind students are overprotected and treated as handicapped.

"What kind of future do you see for yourself?"

"I plan to go into computer programming somewhere out of this State," he said.

The car was parked in the News Building lot and we went up to the City Room. I was still in territory where my memory helped us get around. Curtis stopped me now and then from walking into things.

He "looked" the City Room over with his blind eyes. "Is that a teletype? John, there's a post in front of you."

"What's wrong with the deaf and blind school?" I asked.

"First of all, what do you think a sixth grader should be covering in mathematics?" he asked.

"Algebra?"

"We were doing fundamentals. How to divide and multiply. Before that, we were doing addition and subtraction for more than a year."

We left the paper and walked to a restaurant for lunch. I just held onto his elbow and we sailed along.

I figured a hamburger would be all I could handle blindfolded. He ordered a whole meal after patiently getting the waitress to read this and that part of the menu.

"Have you ever thought much about color?" I asked him.

"Well, the only thing I know about color is from what I read. I know which colors people like in clothes. You know, I don't really care how a thing looks."

"Describe yourself to me," I asked, realizing that I had no impression whatsoever behind the blindfold what he looked like.

"I don't know what I look like," he said. "I'm kind of skinny. I have a crewcut because it's easier to comb."

"Do you have braille copies of your textbooks?"

"Some. Some of it is on tape."

"That's pretty good."

"Yeah, but the library is lousy. The transcribing service is too irregular. It depends too much on volunteers."

"Isn't it pretty much the same in all states?"

"In some states, Iowa in particular, it's really good. There, you have your library, your training center, your counseling all in one huge building, and

the library is the largest in the world, with a thousand transcribers." (Curtis hasn't been there, but he has heard about it.)

"But what's really wrong here is the attitude of the agency. You know what I mean, the attitude that blind people can't do a lot of stuff."

My hamburger felt like it was a foot deep. I heard Curtis cutting his steak, finding his way around the table with ease.

"How many blind people are there in Hawaii?"

"Nine hundred something, and the vocational opportunities are really limited in this State. The only jobs available are social work, vending stand, musician, you see I'm having a hard time thinking of any more."

"Computer programmer?"

"No. That's why I plan to go to Iowa. The vocational opportunities are really wide."

As we finished up lunch, Curtis told about his trip to the Philippines to see a famous surgeon who worked on his eyes.

"I was wide awake while he was working around in there," said Curtis. "There was no pain and no anesthetic. He concentrates and does this. It's true, man. You don't have to pay him anything."

"We were a tour group. Some guys were arthritic, some with cancer, some blind. He cleaned my arteries so that circulation would get started in the first operation. In the second, he took off some of the stuff. My retina grew too much."

"Did it help at all?"

"Yeah. Before I went I couldn't see at all. Now, I can't tell you when you turn the light on. But when I'm in the sun I sometimes see things blocking the light."

"Are you going back again?"

"I don't think so, Curtis said. "I figure, why fight it, man. I'm blind.

"It's more fun being blind," he said. "You have more problems and you get into more interesting situations."

I was pretty sure that if I could have seen right then, I'd have seen a grin.

Curtis Chong and I left the restaurant where we had eaten lunch, I, blindfolded, and hanging onto his elbow.

"Want to go to Waikiki?" he asked.

The next thing I heard in the tape-recording of the whole trip was my voice, with a very perceptible tremble:

"You sure do walk fast. I don't even walk this fast when I'm not blindfolded."

"Just hang on," Curtis said, and he laughed.

"Well, I've driven with reckless drivers before," I said. "But I've never walked with reckless walkers before."

He slowed down a bit. I was into my twentieth hour in total darkness behind the blindfold by then, just wanting to find out what it's like. Curtis has been blind for all of his sixteen years.

"Do you feel objects when you get close to them?" I asked.

"It's not feeling," he said. "It's actually hearing. I didn't know what it was for a long time. You hear echoes off things. I plugged up my ears once as an experiment, and I kept bumping into things."

We were heading for a bus-stop on King Street. The cars and trucks rushing along the street sounded as though they were running right over my head. Finally we stopped, after what seemed an interminable journey.

"Is there a bench or something?" I asked.

"Yeah," Curtis said. "People are sitting on it."

He laughed. "That's one difficulty. You don't know if people are sitting there, so you go over there and look around." Which is what he did, I guess, with me hanging onto his elbow. I felt a wave of helplessness.

The bus came. I stumbled up the steps. He guided my hand to drop the ticket in. "What bus is this?" I asked.

"Waikiki-Campbell," he said.

"How do we tell when we've reached our stop?"

"I keep track of turns and judge by time, and when I think I'm getting close, I ask somebody. If we get off right after we turn onto Kapahulu, that'll be right by the Zoo."

That sounded fine.

"How do you get across streets where there's no light?" I asked.

"People will usually help you," he said. "Some of them are pretty weird, though. You ask them and they don't say anything and walk away. They don't know what to do. It's as if they can't talk to a blind person. But most people are really nice."

We talked some more about school and job problems and opportunities. I lost track of where we were. Curtis told me our stop was coming up. He had found me a seat, and now he guided me off the bus, through the back door, with a swirl of confusion in my mind.

Inside the Zoo, we asked directions to a phone booth to call the newspaper to have a photographer come to get a picture to go with the story. It's a push-button phone. I tried to use it and failed. Curtis had to do it.

We walked around in the Zoo. At one point I hear myself saying in the tape: "I think we're getting over toward the elephants."

"Would you say that most of your blind friends are happy?" I asked.

"I couldn't tell, actually," he said. "Most of them are, on the whole, I'd say. Some of them are angry at the State. Some have a lot of problems. They don't let it bug them."

"What should the State do first?"

"Put all services for the blind under

one department. I think a blind person should be the director. They should throw out some of the present workers unless they change their attitude. They don't believe we can do anything."

The photographer came and followed us around as we walked and talked. Then we heard rock music in Kapiolani Park and followed our ears to it. Pilfridge Sump was playing. It wasn't until the applause that I realized we had walked into the midst of perhaps a thousand people.

We had almost an hour's wait for the bus back. A girl named Kathleen and her friend came up and asked us what we were doing. "He's leading YOU around?" she asked after I explained the blindfold and all.

"Did you ever get lost or have any bad experience?" I asked him.

"I've never been hurt, lost or involved in any trouble. Sometimes, when I have time, I deliberately get off the bus when I don't know where I am and walk around exploring.

"I didn't know anything about streets until I was in the ninth grade. Then I started asking questions. I found out how to go to one place, and how a few streets were arranged, and after that I started doing a little more traveling, and I kept on picking it up. Now I know quite a bit about bus routes and streets. Gradually you accumulate that sort of thing."

"When you remember friends, what do you remember?"

"Voices."

"When you do math, do you see braille numbers in your head?"

"Sometimes. It depends on how difficult it is."

"Do you dream?"

"Just like in television when I'm awake. I dream in sounds."

"Have you ever had a dream in which you felt you were seeing something?"

"I don't know. I used to dream I was driving a car. Not that I saw where I was going. But I knew where I was going and what was around me. Those were really weird dreams."

"Can you get an impression of a person's face by feeling it with your hand?"

"No. I don't bother about that. I only know a person by what he sounds like."

"What are your first memories in life?"

"I remember lying in a crib. One day I know I heard an air-raid siren, and I know I was drinking out of a bottle then, and for some reason I started crying."

The bus came. It was easier to get on

this time. I asked him if he couldn't ride free.

"The only difference between a blind person and a sighted person is that the blind person can't see," Curtis said. "I don't mind the State spending money on things which a sighted person doesn't need and a blind person does. But riding the bus—everybody should pay for that."

It was a slow bus ride back to *The Advertiser*. "I'm beginning to get claustrophobia," I said into the tape-recorder.

"Yeah," said Curtis, sympathizing with me.

"Now I've gone the whole way around," I said. "At first it was a novelty and a challenge. Now I'm feeling impatient and frustrated."

My friend drove Curtis and me to Curtis' house, where we dropped him off. I still had the blindfold on. I never saw Curtis. But I'll never forget him.

A few minutes later, being driven toward home, I suddenly felt as though I couldn't stand it any longer. I tore the black scarf away from my eyes.

We were up on the freeway, heading west. The sun was setting up ahead, and my eyes filled with tears at once.

REMEMBER THE *ARGO* CASE?

by

Harmon Y. Gordon

[Editor's Note: This was the first case in which "The Right to Live in the World: The Disabled in the Law of Torts" written by Professor tenBroek began its career in the courts. William Taylor, blind attorney in Pennsylvania, carried the NFB case. Earlier articles on this case appeared in the January and February 1967 issues of *The Braille Monitor*. The following is reprinted from the Philadelphia (Pennsylvania) *Bulletin*.]

James Argo, blind from birth, peddles brushes, brooms, mops, and dusters door to door.

Ten years ago, Argo fell eight feet to the concrete basement of a store on 69th Street in Upper Darby.

Ten years later--after two jury trials and three appeals to the State Supreme Court--Argo will get \$38,000 in damages.

The Supreme Court ruled--for the second time in five years--that property owners have a duty to protect business invitees--even though blind--from hazardous conditions.

The high court affirmed a jury verdict in that amount awarded him at his second trial on February 16, 1968. At his first trial in 1964 a jury said Argo should get \$27,500.

Argo, now forty-five, spent nine years at the Overbrook School for the Blind.

For twelve years Argo picked up his merchandise from the Pennsylvania Working Home for the Blind at 34th Street and Lancaster Avenue, took the Market Street El to 69th Street and called on stores there.

At 11:30 A.M. on July 11, 1960, Argo approached the door of the Good Company on Market Street near 69th.

"Pushing open the unlocked door, he felt with his cane (apparently striking on the foundation wall or threshold area)," Justice Henry X. O'Brien wrote.

"Then holding open the door with his right shoulder, he grabbed his brooms and stepped quickly so as not to be hit by the door.

"The first step he took was within the range of his cane and brought his foot onto a solid surface.

"Unfortunately, as he entered he stepped into a floorless area and fell eight feet, eight inches onto the basement floor below, as a result of which he sustained serious personal injuries."

Argo was hospitalized in Delaware County Memorial Hospital with a fractured leg and other injuries until October 6, 1960, amassing a \$1,552 bill.

The Good Company was remodeling its property. President Sidney Goodstein was acting as general contractor. The \$27,500 jury verdict in 1964 was against both the Good Company and Goodstein.

The second \$38,000 verdict was against Goodstein alone.

The first jury verdict was sustained by the Supreme Court in a 5-2 decision written by the late Justice Michael A. Musmanno.

Justice Musmanno wrote that property owners have a duty to protect the blind from hazards, noting that the firm could simply have locked the door.

With 15,000 blind persons in Pennsylvania, Justice Musmanno said, blind people are entitled to go anywhere that the public is entitled to go.

The affirming of the 1964 verdict was short-lived. The Supreme Court ordered a new trial when it was brought out that the first trial judge, Francis J. Catania, had communicated to the jury on a technical point without opposing counsel present.

In upholding the second \$38,000 verdict, the Supreme Court noted that the jury, by special finding, found Argo was a business visitor, trying to sell his brooms

and brushes.

Goodstein had contended the premises were no longer a store but instead were a construction site.

Because of Argo's prior dealings with Goodstein, Justice O'Brien said, and "because of his conduct in leaving open the completely finished clear glass doors, which directly abutted on the sidewalk, a jury could reasonably find that Goodstein had given Argo reason to believe his presence was permitted."

"By leaving the door open within easy access of the sidewalk," said O'Brien, "he had issued him (Argo) an implicit invitation."

"We will uphold the finding of the jury that Goodstein was negligent," said Justice O'Brien.

"He should have locked the door."

In both Supreme Court rulings, Justices Benjamin R. Jones and Herbert B. Cohen dissented.

* * * * *

THEY TALK ABOUT BOOKS--AND THE BOOKS TALK TO THEM

by
John Greenya

[Reprinted from *SUNDAY MAGAZINE, The Washington Star*.]

A town the size of Washington D. C. is bound to have its share of book discussion groups, be they good, bad, or effete. One group has been meeting for

over twenty years just to discuss *Finnegan's Wake* by James Joyce; when they get to the end they just start right over again. There are innumerable groups

in which the sole college literature major does almost all of the discussing. And there are groups, well-intentioned to be sure, in which no one ever quite manages to finish the assigned reading.

This is not to suggest, though, that Washington doesn't have its full share of good, vibrant groups. It does. There are many book discussion groups that hold meetings typified by hot talk and cold coffee as participants scream at one another in the kind of anger or joy that only literature can produce. Groups of this sort meet all over the metropolitan area, and new ones pop up unannounced.

One of the newer ones—it “popped up” less than two years ago—never even bothered to print a flyer or insert an ad in a neighborhood newspaper. Yet its membership has remained at a fairly steady figure of fifteen or so, and its meetings have gone on, to the delight of all concerned. Not only is this particular group a very good one, but it is close to being unique. For one thing, every member reads at exactly the same speed.

At least once a month, this group meets in a one-story brick building in Northwest Washington run by one of the many divisions of the Library of Congress. The members talk about novels (mostly) and an occasional nonfiction work, and as with most groups there are heated discussions of style, meaning, sometimes a bit of philosophy. One point always raised in this group, though never in others, is the question of how well the book was read.

If you find the last sentence somewhat puzzling, and still can't understand how a whole group could read

at the same speed—and if you haven't already figured it out—now is the best time to mention that the singular distinguishing mark of this particular book discussion group is that every one in it is blind.

The members use the Talking Book Series (put out by the Blind and Physically Handicapped Division of the Library of Congress,) which is why they argue about how well the book was read, and also why they all read at the same speed—16-2/3 rpm.

“We use the Talking Book Series because all of the members of the group can't read Braille,” says David Thomas, the group's founder. Thomas, himself a blind man, is the Librarian of the Reading Room of the Library of Congress' Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. “I'd heard that they had a group somewhat like this at the Davis Memorial Library in Bethesda, and it seemed to be just right for our little group of steady readers.” That idea came to him about two years ago, and he began to propose, push, and generally father the idea. Today he is the one person most responsible for the existence of the group of blind book lovers who meet once every two weeks in the winter and once every three in the summer.

To these people, most of whom are retired, the book discussion group is a vital link with the active life of thought and art. Most of them are in their fifties but a few are in the seventies. Among the twelve to fifteen “regulars,” there are several professional people, and many of them sorely miss the intellectual stimulation that their professions and jobs used to give them. The book group helps them to maintain that mental edge so important to

learning, study . . . and argument. In fact, if anything else distinguishes this particular discussion group, it is the length and intensity, the "heat" of its discussions.

"Because it's a well-educated group of intelligent people we get into some pretty lively arguments, especially on anything contemporary. Though, come to think of it, the younger point of view doesn't get covered as well as it might," says Thomas. (and when Thomas says "contemporary," he means it. No *Silas Marner* for this group.) In the last year and a half they've read such novels as: *All the Little Live Things* (Wallace Stegner); *Native Son* (Richard Wright); *The Senator* (Drew Pearson); and *The Gitaway Box* (Hilary Milton).

However, if these don't strike you as being the most current, you must remember that it takes both an available reader and a cooperative author before the Talking Book people can put together a new title. The Series now employs professional actors and actresses to narrate the books, but this was not always the case. Anyone who has ever read at length to another person should be able to imagine the difficulties involved in trying to do justice to artistic prose, plus the problem of separating characters and trying to keep them consistent. The Series has come a long way.

Some of the more standard works of fiction include: Conrad's *Victory*; *The Great Gatsby* by Fitzgerald; *Dodsworth*, by Sinclair Lewis; Alan Paton's *Cry the Beloved Country*; Stendhal's *The Red and the Black*; Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio*; *Saint Joan*, by Shaw, and Willa Cather's *Death and the Archbishop*.

"The group doesn't seem to like the women readers' narration as much as it does that of the men, and there are some arguments about that," Thomas says. "But it isn't a real problem." What seems to be more of a problem is one felt by all discussion groups, the difficulty of keeping someone from getting too serious.

"There's always someone who wants to get off on 'philosophy,'" says Thomas with a wry smile, "but someone else always manages to get the floor and turn the discussion back to the usual things." Actually, the biggest difficulty, according to Thomas, is that "We don't always have ten copies of a book on the shelves. If we don't have at least ten copies, we simply can't do it."

One feature that the group would like to present more often is personal appearances by authors, and because it is pretty hard to schedule Stendhal, Shaw, or F. Scott Fitzgerald, they have to hope that the author of a book that has been made into a Talking Book will appear in the Washington area. Once in a while they get lucky, as they did in the case of Hilary Milton, who lives in Vienna, Virginia, and who, until his recent retirement, worked for NASA.

Mr. Milton's first novel, *The Gitaway Box*, was a simple human tale of two men, one quite old and the other--his grandson--quite young. When the boy's parents were killed in an auto accident, the grandfather discovers that there is no money whatsoever left for the youth and that the state welfare agency is about to "adopt" him. So the old man builds a "gitaway box," an elaborate contraption with fold-up wheels and various compartments for various basic needs, and

the two males, youth and age, set out to walk from Arlington, Virginia, to Besemer, Alabama, the old man's home.

One of the members of the discussion group learned that Milton lived near Washington. He called and invited him, and not long after the author appeared at one of the meetings, along with his small mock-up of the "gitaway box." After a brief speech in which he talked about the concept of the novel and the construction of it, the actual plotting and writing, he opened the floor to questions and they flooded in.

"How did you get an idea like that?"

"Why didn't you make the boy a little older so he could help out more?"

"Could it really have been done?"

"What does the box 'look' like?"

Finally, Milton simply took the box over to the nearest table and invited the group to come up and "see" it (the way most blind people see whatever they can't hear) with their hands. After a few minutes of explaining what this and that compartment was for, he found himself talking about a whole new area of the story and of its genesis. When the night was over he admitted, "I learned more about my own story than I'd ever known before." And he summed it all up by saying, "It's odd, but that novel was never as alive to me while I was writing it as it was during that discussion."

Obviously, Mr. Thomas would like to have more such meetings, to see more authors or experts come before his group. But he is not about to change the concept of the discussion group, or, as he calls it, "the review series," because the main point is still—and will always be—to get people to do more reading.

* * * * *

PROFILE OF A COURAGEOUS LADY

by
Kay Donelson

[Reprinted from the San Gabriel Valley *Tribune* (Covina, California).]

Guts, gall and a fighting spirit. Stacey Pignotti of El Monte has all three.

Two years ago the attractive, thirty-year-old blonde lost her sight when a gun accidentally discharged, sending a bullet through her skull.

Instead of withdrawing from life, she has chosen to meet it head-on. To Stacey

that meant returning to work as a hairdresser.

Impossible as it may sound, she is succeeding.

"I was a nervous wreck the first week. I cried, bumped into things and wanted to quit," she said.

But she hasn't.

In the four months since she set up shop at Joseph's Scissor Styling in Arcadia, she's made remarkable progress.

Within ten days of her return, she was cutting, washing and setting hair.

"She was very nervous," recalled one of her first clients. "What scared me the most was seeing her hand shake. What she was doing was right, it was just that she was scared."

Three weeks later she was giving color treatments called frostings in which selected strands of hair are lightened.

"You'd be sure she was sighted, that she actually was seeing what she was doing," said the woman who had her hair frosted.

To be sure, it has been a fight all the way for Mrs. Pignotti, who at one time owned her own hair salon in Pasadena.

"What's hardest for me to remember is that others are sometimes nervous being around a blind person," she says.

There's no doubt that Stacey, who was considered one of the top hair stylists in the area before she lost her sight, knows her craft.

She wields brush and comb with professional aplomb while her hands skillfully perfect the style she wants.

She has met the problem of setting hair by having patrons hand her clips and

rollers as she asks for them.

Beyond that she receives little assistance.

"I have to take my place in the sighted world," she says.

Mrs. Pignotti's three children, Vince, twelve, Maria, ten, and Stacey, nine, are thrilled with their mother's achievements which include ironing, cleaning, and cooking as well.

"I can do just about everything now except drive," says the El Monte woman whose rehabilitation came about through her own determination and the encouragement of devoted friends rather than an institutional program.

While others might regard her dilemma a tragedy, she finds it just the opposite.

"I have learned something of value. I look into people now. I'm certainly not as materialistic as I used to be," she says.

Amazed at her own achievements, she says what she misses most is not seeing her children or the beauties of nature.

"But on the other hand, I don't see the smog or the dirty city or the gray days. I'm not affected by what's outside but rather by what I feel inside," she says.

"I can honestly say I've never been happier in my life. I feel each day is new and beautiful... as a step in the right direction."

BLUEPRINT FOR THE BLIND

by
Bob Oliver

[Reprinted from *Sweden Now*, Stockholm, Sweden.]

The bottom of Stockholm harbor is covered with a thick layer of silt carried down by the waters of Lake Malaren as they pour into an arm of the Baltic around the fourteen islands that shore up the Swedish capital. A diver foraging in the depths soon finds himself shrouded in an inky cloud. He is, for all practical purposes, blind.

Thirty-seven-year-old Sven Nahlin, a professional diver who takes on everything from searching for submerged murder weapons to salvaging chunks of water-logged oak, turned to a Stockholm school for the blind to find out how to shift for yourself under such conditions.

"Unfortunately, we have no literature on the subject," he was told by a school official. "But you have an interesting job. Would you care to come to our school and tell the students here about it?"

That day three years ago changed Nahlin's life and opened up a new world for hundreds of blind youngsters. After describing the ups and downs of diving for a living, Nahlin asked how many of the young people in the audience would like to learn to scuba dive. All one hundred forty-eight raised their hands.

School authorities balked at the idea at first. Too risky. After all, the blind can't expect to do the same things normal people do. Or can they?

Nahlin's irrepressible optimism prevailed, and the results astounded even him. "They're simply fantastic! They've learned faster than regular divers, and all have been down to forty-five feet, he raved after a round of training sessions in the swimming pool of the Tomtebodav Institute for the Blind and the waters of Lake Malaren.

Then, with the financial backing of several Swedish companies, Nahlin and his blind mermen were off on a two-week trip to the Black Sea at the invitation of the Bulgarian Government. Returning with three 2,000-year-old amphorae which the Bulgarians had allowed them to keep despite a law forbidding the removal of antique objects, they promptly held a press conference.

"I got a grip on one of the handles," fourteen-year-old Krister Johannesson beamed. "I was swimming with a trainer and a Bulgarian diver, and they showed me to it."

"You can find old Phoenician ships on the bottom, too," Goran Karlsson, fifteen, cut in. As an afterthought, he added, "It was the first time we've dived in the sea. You're a little lighter, that's all."

For Sven Nahlin the trip was both exhilarating and sobering. His teen-age charges had taught him that blindness can be a strength as well as a handicap. A blind

diver is less subject to claustrophobia in tight places and less likely to panic in dark or murky waters. If blind boys make such crack scuba divers, he reasoned, why do we put them to work making brushes or sausages--tasks machines can do better--or banish them to a life of enforced idleness.

One of the first blind boys Nahlin took diving now works for his four-man Stockholm diving firm, Nahlins Dykeri AB. He was just suiting up to go out on a job when I met Nahlin in the cluttered equipment room that looks for all the world like a mock-up of Davy Jones's locker. An expensive piece of equipment was left way inside of a pipeline, Nahlin explained, and now someone had to go in after it. An assignment made to order for a blind man.

Another of the forty-four blind youths Nahlin has taken under his flipper showed signs of technical genius. "We got him into a good tech school here," Nahlin said matter-of-factly, "and when he graduates as Sweden's first blind radio technician, Philips will take him on and give him a laboratory of his own for developing electronic devices for the blind. Here's an example of what I mean," he continued, taking what looked like a small transistor radio from his pocket. "It's an ultrasonic transmitter for calling a seeing-eye-dog."

Nahlin absently fondled the woolly ears of the venerable gray terrier beside him on the car seat that serves as a sofa at Nahlins Dykeri. As the world's only scuba-diving dog, she obviously felt right at home in that room lit by four naked light bulbs and littered with coils of rope, diving gear, an air compressor and a motley assortment of corroded trophies

from the deep--anchors, a Russian helmet, smashed parking meters, cameras, a hand grenade and pieces of Swedish oak that three hundred years in the Baltic had turned almost black. A single plank sells for at least three hundred dollars. Between diving jobs Nahlin and his associates fashion this black gold into cuff links, trays, and handles for bottle openers and cheese slicers.

But now his mind was on a different kind of business. "What we're trying to do," he said, "is make blind young people attractive on the labor market. Did you know that half of Kodak's darkroom personnel in Sweden are blind? Well, there are plenty of other jobs the blind can handle as well or better than people with twenty/twenty vision. They make excellent sound technicians, locksmiths, musicians, newscasters, disk jockeys. In fact, we have four radio announcers that sound better than anything you hear on Swedish radio. Yet, there's not a single blind person on the whole network.

"Tomorrow one of our girls, Anika, is going to have fifteen minutes on the air. She's an extremely talented musician. I'm not saying that a blind person is automatically musical, but if you have a good ear to begin with, loss of sight seems to sharpen it. Just last week, four of our instrumentalists cut a stereo single, and they're due to appear on a popular TV talk show one of these days.

"Specialization is the key. That's the only way blind young people can land the high-paying jobs they need. Being blind is expensive, after all. Just think how cab fares alone can mount up. Sure, the Swedish welfare system guarantees that no handicapped person suffers physical

privation. But a person who feels useless dies spiritually. Our boys and girls want to tell the world, 'We're not sick. We're just blind.' "

At least part of the world will get the message when Nahlin accompanies eleven blind youths on a five-week jaunt through California. "It's kind of a good-will tour, arranged by the Vasa Order of America," he told me. "The kids will give diving exhibitions and put on a musical show. But we also hope to learn something and have allowed ourselves a free week to study American rehabilitation programs. They're among the best in the world."

Nahlin's enthusiasm and drive are contagious. What began as a one-man campaign has developed into a twenty-two-man-and-still-growing task force. First his wife and fourteen-year-old son became involved. ("With this diving business taking up my days and work with the blind my evenings and weekends, it's the only way they could see anything of me.") Then a corps of volunteers--leaders they call themselves--gradually collected around him. In Nahlin's words, "When they saw how much fun I was having, I couldn't keep them away."

None of the leaders has rehabilitation experience, but each brings some particular skills into play. The focal point of their efforts is Orbyhus, an eighteenth-century inn seventy miles outside Stockholm which Nahlin and company took over a year ago and transformed into a home away from home on weekends and vacations for three hundred blind young people between the ages of thirteen and twenty.

An electrical engineer for the

Swedish Telecommunications Administration got his hands on a cast-off telephone switchboard, replaced blinking lights with tone signals that ring a bell with blind operators and presto! Orbyhus had a forty-four extension telephone exchange. Radio engineers in the group installed three sophisticated short-wave sets which enable Orbyhus hams to talk with people all over the world. An inter-com hook-up carries student-produced newscasts, musical programs, and special reports to every room.

Outside you can see some of Orbyhus' twenty-two blind tenants smoothly maneuvering tractors, motor scooters, snowmobiles or horses through obstacle courses on instructions received through their headsets from walkie-talkie-toting leaders. It teaches them to follow verbal directions to the letter and, more important, gives them a big helping of self-confidence.

But life at Orbyhus is not all fun and games. If guests didn't work the required one hour a day, they couldn't eat for the simple reason that the cooking and gardening--just like the cleaning, maintenance, and other chores involved in keeping the old inn shipshape--are entirely up to the kids. "We wouldn't have it any other way, even if we could afford it," Nahlin said. "And neither would they."

Nahlin has always gone straight to private enterprise for financial and technical assistance, rather than appeal for government support. "It's not that I have anything against public aid for the handicapped," he emphasized. "I guess I just don't have the patience to fill out thirty-five forms and wait two or three

years for something to happen.”

True to his word, Nahlin and his friends are currently approaching Swedish companies for the wherewithal to build a revolutionary “clock village” now on the drawing boards that represents an entirely new approach to equipping the blind to handle themselves in our cluttered world.

It will consist of twelve units arranged like the numbers on a clock face, each unit housing two young people and containing the most up-to-date equipment so that the tenants learn to live with modern technology. In the center of the village there will be a two-story structure with living quarters for leaders on the top floor and a swimming pool and communal facilities on the ground floor. The entire works is expected to cost about \$200,000. The bill for each number house, which Nahlin hopes individual companies will pick up, will come to about \$12,000.

As Sven Nahlin describes it, everything in the clock village will run like ... well, like clockwork. “There will be paths leading from each unit to the central

building. Twelve o’clock will be north, three o’clock east, and so on. No orientation problems. Suppose I want one of the boys at the five o’clock house to get the lawn mower. I call him on the phone, tell him the mower is on the grass plot halfway between three and four o’clock, ask him to bring it to me at, say, the eleven o’clock house, and that’s that.

“After a couple of days the system will come so naturally that clock villagers will apply it in the outside world, using their nose as the twelve o’clock reference. You’re blind, let’s say, and you sit down at a table in a restaurant. The waiter is acquainted with the clock system because of all the publicity it has gotten. He places your order on the table and says something like this: ‘Your bread is at eleven o’clock, wine at one, salad at nine, salad dressing at twelve.’

“You immediately have the placement in your mind. No fumbling around, no overturned glasses. Suddenly, you don’t have to be led around on a leash. You’re not sick. You’re not a cripple. Just blind, that’s all.”

NORTH CAROLINA CONVENTION

by

Clarence E. Collins

Excitement was running high on the sixth floor of the White House Inn, in Charlotte, North Carolina on September 18, 1970. Though the first gavel would not fall on the First Annual Convention of the Tar Heel State Federation of the Blind until ten o’clock the following day,

members were coming in by the dozens. Everybody seemed to be having a good time; there was good talk, good fellowship, and a general good feeling all the way around. The committees had worked for months planning, changing, and replanning under the able leadership

of Mrs. Hazel Staley, chairman of convention arrangements. The Presidential Suite was buzzing with activity. Don Capps sat with a cup of coffee in hand answering questions and giving advice on technicalities regarding the convention. Not a single member of our organization, including the president, had ever taken part in putting together or presiding at a convention.

Saturday, September 19, 1970 the registration desk was opened at nine a.m. and immediately it became a beehive of activity. For everyone who registered, there was a "fat goody bag" and the materials table was loaded with all kinds of literature in ink, Braille and on discs.

There was some apprehension as to whether the president, who was still convalescing from a short, but very serious illness, would be able to M. C. the entire convention, but the faith of his members and his own dogged determination pulled him through all the way. When he rapped for order at exactly ten o'clock, September 19, he said "When I finish the next statement, I want every person in here to stand and yell as loudly as he possibly can." He then said "The first Annual Convention of the Tar Heel State Federation is now in Session." The yell that went up almost shook the building. It was not a Rebel yell but it was a yell of triumph. Everyone knew how difficult this first year had been, but we had come through it and were victorious. After the invocation by the Reverend Kenneth Hartley, pastor of First Christian Church, the local chapter, which was hosting the convention, presented the president with a beautiful rosewood gavel inscribed as follows: "The Tar Heel State Federation of the Blind, 1970." The president then

welcomed the guests and made the usual announcements. The convention was underway with a panel discussion by the chapter presidents; an amendment to the constitution was read by Mrs. Janice Nicholson. The Director of Special Education in our local system, Mr. Calvin Davis, delivered an interesting address entitled "The Blind in our Public Schools," followed by a session of questions and answers. Mr. Lex Hood, Chairman of the Board of the Mecklenburg County Association for the Blind, told of the services to the blind offered by that agency. A talk on bowling by the blind was made by E. S. Phillips of Roanoke, Virginia.

The convention opened the afternoon session with a panel discussion led by Don Capps, on local and national legislation. Dr. Fred Crawford, Harry Troop, and Rudolph Moore participated in a very interesting discussion. Dr. Crawford, Executive Director of the South Carolina Commission for the Blind, gave an inspiring speech on the "Future Rehabilitation for the Blind." Wayne Simpson, a certified public accountant from Salisbury, North Carolina, spoke to us on "What I Know about the Deaf-Blind." Earl Jennings, from the North Carolina State Commission for the Blind, told us of the services of that organization and passed out pamphlets giving detailed information on its work. Shaw Brown, a member of the Mooresville Lions Club, spoke on the activities of Camp Dogwood. Miss Lois Boltin, past president of the South Carolina Aurora Club, told of her experiences operating a switchboard. Then, Shirley Troop, the young daughter of our first vice president, treated us to a refreshing report entitled "My First NFB Convention." By this time,

we were growing a little weary with the long afternoon session, but we were snapped back by an impromptu, rip roaring speech by Mrs. John Bass Brown, a member of the Board of the State Commission for the Blind. Her talk filled with wit and wisdom left us chuckling as we adjourned at five o'clock.

At exactly seven-thirty, the Capital Ball Room, a thing of beauty, decorated in blue and gold, came alive with one hundred members and guests for our First Annual Convention Banquet. Vases of white dogwood, our State flower, adorned each table in the banquet hall. The invocation was given by Mr. W. E. Poe, Chairman of the Charlotte School Board. The highlight of the evening was the banquet address delivered by Donald C. Capps, First Vice President of the National Federation of the Blind. As usual, Don was in top form, and was cheered enthusiastically by everyone. Mr. Bill Marley, Music Director of the Grace Baptist Church, led us in the singing of the Federation Song. The only door prize given at the banquet was a new fifty dollar bill. Before adjourning the banquet, the president invited everybody to the hospitality room where again, good talk, good fellowship, and a general good feeling was enjoyed by all.

Sunday morning was set aside for the internal business of the Federation. Beginning at eight-thirty, a short business meeting of the Executive Board was held

in the President's Suite where coffee and sweet rolls were served. After the invocation in the Assembly Room, our special guests were again welcomed and given an opportunity to tell us something about their own organizations. We had guests from Georgia, South Carolina, Virginia, and California. Mr. Robert McDonald, president of the Virginia Federation, invited us to their convention in April. After a lively business session, the following officers were elected: president, Clarence E. Collins, Route 11, Box 155, Charlotte, North Carolina 28213; first vice president, Mrs. Robert Staley, 4924 Snow White Lane, Charlotte, North Carolina 28213; second vice president, Harry Troop, 821 b-S, Bostian, China Grove, North Carolina 28203; secretary, Mrs. Rudolph Moore, 2915 Shenandoah Avenue, Charlotte, North Carolina 28205; treasurer, Robert M. Staley, 4924 Snow White Lane, Charlotte, North Carolina. The following board of directors were elected: Mrs. Thelma Flynn, Raleigh, North Carolina; Ralph Caskey, Greensboro; and Mrs. John Nicholson, also of Greensboro, North Carolina.

The First Annual Convention of the Tar Heel State Federation of the Blind registered one hundred and six people. There will probably be other conventions of our organization that are larger and better in some ways, but for enthusiasm and member participation, there will never be another that will top our First Annual Convention.

* * * * *

MEET OUR STATE PRESIDENT—JOHN FORD AND OUR STATE AFFILIATE—MONTANA

I was born in May of 1944 and, after traveling about the country for a year or so with my parents, spent my early childhood growing up on a ranch near Fishtail, Montana—a town of about fifty people. I have one sister who is four years younger than I.

When I became of school age, my parents had to make the same decision as do the parents of every blind child; “Was I to attend the residential school for the blind in Great Falls or was I to attend a public school?” I started first grade in a public school because my first teacher was willing to spend extra time in working with me orally and because my mother was willing to read my lessons to me.

I graduated from high school before my first association with other blind persons. That summer I attended the Summer School for the Adult Blind, sponsored by the Montana Association for the Blind; and it was at that time, 1962, that I first joined the MAB. I attended the Summer School for two sessions and I taught there in 1965 and 1966. In 1965 my wife-to-be also taught there. She was Susan Willoughby from Iowa, and because

I followed her back to Iowa, I was really introduced to the NFB, the Iowa Commission for the Blind, and the possibility of agencies and organizations of the blind working together. We were married in September 1966, when I also began operating a new snack bar in Bozeman at the newly-opened Federal Building. We have been in Bozeman since.

As I became more active in our state affiliate, I was appointed chairman of the Nominating Committee and then of the Resolutions Committee. When, in 1968, our president announced that he would not seek another term of office, I was asked to run for president. In that same year we attended our first NFB Convention, which that year was convened in Iowa. Since that Convention, I can truly say I have been a Federationist. We have returned to each Convention since for education, stimulation, and revitalization for ourselves and for our state affiliate.

The Montana Association for the Blind came into being in 1947. It later became affiliated with the National Federation of the Blind.



The major project of the MAB has been the Summer School for the Adult Blind, which we began sponsoring in 1948. This year the Division of Visual Services of the Department of Public Welfare and the Montana School for the Deaf and Blind were co-sponsors with us. As of this date, the Orientation Program is still in session. It has been an extended session of eight weeks as opposed to the five-week session in previous years. With the additional funding that this cooperative venture has allowed, we have been able to attract a more experienced staff and a larger student body. The purpose of the Summer School has been to orient persons to blindness and to provide them with the necessary skills by which they can continue to live active, normal lives. Until recently, the majority of students have been older people, because of the year-round facilities made available to Montanans by other states.

Our major fundraising project has been the sale of a memo calendar, about which there was an article in the March, 1970 issue of *The Monitor*. We also conduct white cane drives and a letter campaign. We have recently become participants in United Givers' campaigns in several communities.

The MAB now has approximately one hundred and fifty members. We are beginning to attract more young people as

well as those who have been long-time members or those who have joined our organization after having been introduced to it through the Summer School program. We now have nine local chapters, with one charter just presented at the 1970 MAB convention. The Board of Directors has seven members. Besides the three executive officers, each of four districts in the State is represented. Quarterly meetings of the Board are held in different cities about the State so that many of the members have an opportunity to take an active part in the organization other than through committee work and the annual convention. In 1969 the assembled convention passed a resolution which made it possible for each chapter not represented on the Board of Directors to send a delegate to Board meetings. These delegates have the same privileges as Board members except that they may not vote at the Board meetings.

The Montana Association for the Blind is becoming an active affiliate with numerous projects and with more truly active members. This year we took our largest delegation over to the NFB Convention. We are proud of this NFB affiliate; though it may have problems yet to be solved. I have watched it increase in membership and activity in the eight years since I have been a member and I expect that it will continue to grow, to prosper, and to speak well for the NFB in Montana.

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BLIND BOY MAKES GOOD AT JOB

by
Dick Finn

[Reprinted from the San Diego (California) *Evening Tribune*.]

Quick, sure hands stuff and wrap another taco. But the eyes don't see it.

For Bob De Zonia, sixteen and blind since birth, wrapping hundreds of tacos, burritos and other Mexican food items is more than the usual summer job.

It represents responsibility, acceptance, and freedom of action in a world where the ability to see is taken for granted.

"I heard the other kids talking about getting summer jobs. I wanted to get one, too," recalls De Zonia, pausing between orders. "Now I have one, I feel like one of the gang."

De Zonia had described his interest in a summer job to Charles Lawrence, his mobility instructor at El Cajon Valley High School. The teacher immediately approached the management of Taco Bell, El Cajon.

"I had my doubts at first," recalls William J. Cason, operator of the establishment. His first thoughts considered a blind person working around blazing hot cooking equipment and heated pans with sauces and meats.

But Cason, a Navy and Air Force veteran who prides himself on running a tight ship, decided De Zonia could fill a specialist's function during peak periods. Now, the youth's performance has

dispelled all his doubts.

"He's as good as any person who has sight, sometimes better," Cason reports. "He's a tremendous young man who moves around as well as anyone else.

"The kid is exceptionally good," adds manager Robert S. Vician. He notes De Zonia stopped bringing his cane to work after his third day and gets around entirely by a map he drew in his mind.

De Zonia has mastered navigation skills to the point where he can go downtown from El Cajon. He also finds no difficulty in traveling across town by bus to visit his girl friend, Maureen Ryan, in Linda Vista.

He is a talented musician, playing the piano, organ, and guitar. He performs in the five-member "Sound Radiations", a rock music group.

De Zonia credits much of his success to Lawrence, his mobility instructor.

"If it wasn't for him I wouldn't be going anywhere or doing anything as well as I do," he says.

"The cool thing is he gets across what he wants to teach in a friendly, informal manner. You learn something without feeling you have to."

Bob is the son of Mr. and Mrs.

Robert E. De Zonia.

THE KENTUCKY CONVENTION

by

Betty J. Niceley

August 28 and 29 were red letter days for Kentucky Federationists. They made their way to the Kentucky Hotel in Louisville to meet with Dr. Kenneth Jernigan in a most successful convention. The group celebrated the organization of a new chapter in Covington. The various chapter reports and the discussions with Ken Jernigan produced a feeling that progress can be made in work for the blind.

Robert E. Whitehead was elected again as president of the State organization. Assisting him on the State

Board will be Ernest Bourne, first vice-president; Arthur Kopp, second vice-president; Eloise Becker, third vice-president; Betty Niceley, corresponding secretary; Peggy Peak, recording secretary; Harold Reagan, treasurer; Pat Vice, legislative chairman; and Glen Shoulders, financial chairman.

Ken Jernigan demonstrated his usual eloquence in the banquet address. He made us more grateful for his leadership. We also commend his taste in the choice of a Kentucky girl to be our First Lady.

THE NFB LOOKS AT THE PRESIDENT'S FAMILY ASSISTANCE ACT

[Editor's Note: The following testimony was submitted for the printed record of public hearings conducted by the Committee on Finance, United States Senate, with reference to H.R. 16311, the Family Assistance Act of 1970.]

Mr. Chairman, the National Federation of the Blind is unalterably opposed to a mandatory title XVI in the Social Security Act, which would lump together the aged, blind, and disabled into one common administrative welfare program, thereby eliminating or restricting the possibility of consideration of the categorical or group needs of these

separately and distinctively different classes of disadvantaged persons.

It has been our experience over the past eight years in which the optional title XVI has been in the Social Security Act, that the Federal administrators of welfare programs have not recognized the group and individual needs and distinctive

categorical requirements of the aged, blind, and disabled. On the contrary, they have acted in total disregard of such categorical differences in needs. The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare has interpreted "reasonable standards" in Section 1602 (a)(13) of the Social Security Act to mean "common standards", as set forth explicitly in State Letter 616, Part C, issued January 9, 1963. We don't have to wait to know how the Department would act under a mandatory title XVI—we know how they acted for almost eight long years even under an optional title XVI plan!

Since the founding of the National Federation of the Blind in 1940, we have sought to make the federally-supported State programs of Aid to the Blind a force for rehabilitation in the lives of needy blind persons. In Congress after Congress, we have supported proposals which would reconstitute these programs so that they would offer, not mere subsistence and survival, but so that they would offer a means of achieving restoration to normal, self-sufficient life; our goal has been rehabilitation, not relief; our purpose has been the encouragement of incentive and initiative, not the smothering of it; the stimulation of the desire for independence and self-help, not the stifling of it. We blind men and women reject emphatically and unequivocally that dependence upon public assistance is a permanent way of life for many blind persons; given hope, help, and opportunity, not just food, clothing, and shelter, they will resume their place as contributors in the community.

On the other hand, H.R. 16311 proposes to establish a mandatory title XVI and to repeal titles I, X, and XIV of

the Social Security Act granting assistance to the aged, blind, and disabled—categories which would thus be scrambled together into one agency, where the personnel would be all things to all clients; where the distinctive needs of the aged, the blind, and the disabled would be disregarded; where their unique problems could receive little, if any, specialized assistance toward their solution.

Why does the Administration seek to make mandatory the optional title XVI, Mr. Chairman? In November, 1935, the American Public Welfare Association (APWA) published a pamphlet containing "suggested" model legislation as a guide to the states in the establishment of welfare departments and public assistance programs. A study of the provisions of these model bills reveals the major directions into which APWA, and the Federal administrators, sought to channel public assistance legislation by the states. In brief, these directions were: "integration" of all public assistance programs; subordination of state agencies to Washington; a medical rather than an economic definition of blindness; "individual need individually determined"; and the imposition of relatives' responsibility. A principal theme stressed throughout the APWA pamphlet was that of integration of services, by which the various programs of aid to the aged, the blind, and dependent children—separated by Congress in distinct titles of the Social Security Act—would be lumped together within a single bureau.

The American Public Welfare Association was and is, of course, the creature of state public welfare administrators and is tightly controlled by them. It is unfortunate that these

administrators over the years have been unable or unwilling to shake loose from their preoccupation with the desire for broad discretionary powers and the perpetuation of the concepts of the Elizabethan poor laws in the administration of the various public assistance titles of the Social Security Act. This drive on the part of public welfare administrators for broad administrative discretion and increased power in their own hands has persisted unabated over the intervening thirty-five years since the enactment of the Social Security Act. Now they hope to culminate their drive with the enactment into law of a mandatory title XVI.

It is now claimed that equity requires that aid to the needy aged, blind, and disabled be administered as though the needs of these distinct groups of people are identical, as though each group has no needs differing from the needs of the other group. But is efficiency of administration more important than providing people in need with the help they require? Is ease of administration more important than adequacy and suitability of services provided? We would remind the Committee that the Federally-supported State public assistance programs were established, and they are maintained at a cost of billions of dollars annually—not for the convenience of the program administrators—but they were established and are maintained at great public expense in order that people who are unable to provide for their own wants will not starve, go naked, or be without shelter in America. In the categorical programs of aid to the aged, the blind, and the disabled, operated under titles I, X, and XIV of the Social Security Act, it is not only possible, it is

usual to recognize and allow for special needs common to a group disability. The blind may be allowed an additional amount in their aid grant for clothing and grooming or guide service, or a telephone in the home may be considered essential for them; disabled recipients of aid may be granted an additional allowance for attendant care; the aged may be allowed an amount substantially in excess of the grant to the blind and the disabled that they may be provided with needed special care.

Under a mandatory title XVI, however, the aged, blind, and disabled are to be judged as though their physical, social, and economic requirements and difficulties are the same—the blind person of twenty-three, vigorous, trainable and employable, able to work and support himself; the person of eighty-seven, worn in body and wandering in mind; the severely disabled person, immobilized, unemployable, the father of several small children.

Although the provision in H.R. 16311 to the effect that if a recipient is eligible for two or more categories, he shall be granted aid under that standard of assistance which is the highest in amount, seems to indicate that the categorical approach will be preserved in the administration of aid under a mandatory title XVI plan, that special and distinctive group needs of the aged, blind, and disabled can and will still be met under the combined program of public assistance, the assertion is theoretical only—and an examination of the nation-wide public assistance figures make this most evident. According to HEW's publication, the *Social Security Bulletin*, March, 1970, in October of 1969 there were 80,400 blind

recipients within the country; 2,063,000 aged recipients; and 785,000 disabled persons on the aid rolls. Nationally, then, there were ten disabled and twenty-five aged persons on public assistance for each blind person receiving aid. So, Mr. Chairman, using our sad experience of how HEW administered even an optional title XVI, under a mandatory plan to meet the special needs of one blind recipient of aid, it must mean that a State would probably be required to make the same allowance available to thirty-five aged and disabled recipients.

For example--and using the ratio of the national figures--a State with a caseload of 1,000 needy blind, which wishes to continue a higher allowance to the blind for guide service for shopping, must also make a similar higher allowance available to its 10,000 disabled and 25,000 aged needy.

It is very obvious to the National Federation of the Blind that, from the foregoing, the cost of such an "across-the-board" policy as would inevitably be developed under a mandatory title XVI plan would be so expensive that it would not be applied--thus, the special requirements of the aged, the blind, and the disabled would not be met under the combined aid plan. So, a mandatory title XVI plan does not result in making special allowances available to all needy persons but rather it does result in denying special allowances to those who, welfare experience has shown over the years, have a grievous need for them.

The eventual effect of a mandatory title XVI plan would be disastrous for the nation's needy and dependent people; the

effect could be particularly disastrous and discriminatory for the nation's needy blind with their traditionally recognized group and individual special needs. If the same standardized needs requirements are applied to the aged, blind, and disabled alike, in total disregard of their separate, different, and distinctive categorical needs, then all needy people would be reduced to the same low level of deprivation and destitution. If this isn't the real objective of those pressing so hard for a mandatory title XVI, then why seek such a scheme--why not continue the separate titles for the aged, the blind, and the disabled?

Last October, the average aid to the blind payment in the country was ninety-seven dollars and ninety-five cents, the disabled payment eighty-nine dollars and fifty cents, and the aged received an average grant of seventy-three dollars and thirty cents. Certainly the leveling effect of a mandatory title XVI will not bring up the payments of the aged and disabled to the higher amount available to the blind--but the result inevitably will be much the reverse--it will result in the reduction of the amount received by the blind.

Over the years, the States have developed different laws, differing policies and practices, concerned with their three programs of public assistance for their adult needy--the aged, blind, and disabled. Not only have there been differing standards of need and payment, of eligibility requirements and extent of payment, but there have developed differences as to resources that can be held (such as cash, insurance, etc.), provisions of relatives' responsibility, for liens or recovery of property, for allocation of

income to dependents--these and other factors have been regarded and treated separately, have been regarded and treated as variable according to the distinctive characteristics of the three aided groups. The effect of a mandatory title XVI would inevitably be to wipe out these developed differences.

Translated into specific terms--a State which has no lien law for the needy blind, but has a rigorously enforced lien law for the aged recipients of aid would be compelled, sooner or later, and in the interests of "equity" and "uniformity", either to eliminate its lien law affecting the aged, or apply the lien law to the needy blind. The National Federation of the Blind believes that the State's action in such a situation is all too easily predictable--the lien law will be altered to include the blind recipients of aid. Many other similar instances could be cited to demonstrate disadvantages which could result to the blind and to the other adult groups of needy individuals from a mandatory title XVI--unless this Committee and the Congress act to prevent it by refusing to repeal titles I, X, and XIV of the Social Security Act.

As early as 1830 the State of Indiana enacted a measure to provide for the support of its needy blind residents. In 1935, when the Social Security Act was adopted by Congress, some twenty-seven States already had adopted statutes establishing special programs of public assistance for the needy blind. At the time the optional title XVI was enacted in 1962, two Federal financial 'carrots' were provided to induce States to adopt title XVI: States could average payments over the three adult programs in claiming Federal reimbursement; and in aid to the

blind and aid to the disabled, under a title XVI plan. Federal financial participation could be secured up to one-half of fifteen dollars in vendor payments for medical care, hitherto only available in the Old Age Assistance program. Even in spite of these powerful financial inducements, Mr. Chairman, only some seventeen States have seen fit to adopt the optional plan of combining their adult aids during the last eight years!

Mr. Chairman, these actions by the States are a recognition that the problems and the needs of the blind are different from those of others requiring aid--they are different and distinct from those of the aged, and they are different and distinct from those of the disabled. It is equally true that the needs and the problems of the aged differ from those of the blind--and the difficulties and the requirements of the disabled are also unique and need specialized and separate consideration and treatment. Bureaucratic convenience or administrative efficiency should not be sufficient reason to abandon the great progress made over almost a century and a half by the States in making special provisions for their needy blind citizens.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, in order to protect and safeguard the welfare of the needy aged, blind, and severely disabled of the nation, we earnestly urge you and plead with you to reject the proposal for a mandatory title XVI plan of assistance for the adult aids and to retain titles I, X, and XIV of the Social Security Act.

And now, Mr. Chairman, the National Federation of the Blind wishes to comment briefly on the proposed addition

of title XX of the Social Security Act as an integral part of H.R. 16311.

Section 2004, pages 109-112 of the bill, dealing with Organization and Administration, subsection (a)(3) requires the Governor of a State to designate a State agency or a local prime sponsor to administer the program of services. In order to safeguard the present organizational structure administering services to the blind, we suggest the following amendment to be added at the end:

Notwithstanding the provisions of this paragraph, the State agency administering or supervising the administration of social services or other health, education, or welfare programs for the blind under State law or by designation of the governor may be designated to administer or supervise the administration of programs related to the blind under this title.

Section 2022, pages 131-132 of the bill, dealing with Options for Program Integration, subsection (a)(2) permits the Governor of a State to transfer an amount not in excess of twenty per centum of the Federal assistance available to the State with respect to any program included in the plan for use in carrying out one or more other programs. To safeguard programs for the blind, which are the smallest and, hence, receive the least amount of Federal assistance, we suggest the following amendment be added at the end:

and no Federal assistance may be transferred from any health, education, or welfare program for the blind.

Finally, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, we would like to comment generally on this whole business of social services. There can be no doubt that America is at the cross-roads in dealing with public welfare. The present system as a whole has fallen into disrepute with the public, the press, the legislators, and most of all, with the recipients. The causes are many. However, chief among them are the inability of public welfare administrators, State and Federal, to make good on their assurances to the Congress of decreased caseloads by means of the Service Amendments of 1956 and 1962; and the thoroughly discredited practice of individual need individually determined, with its corollary of a minute and demoralizing investigation of all income and resources.

Over the years even the public welfare administrators could see the writing on the wall. The mounting dissatisfaction in State legislative bodies and in the Congress over mounting caseloads and costs, especially in the AFDC program, and the lack of any imaginative approaches by the administrators, combined to lead to the 1956 Amendments to the Social Security Act, incorporating provisions for self-support and self-care.

While the 1956 Amendments thus added constructive elements and a positive approach to the administration of public assistance, most of the States were slow in implementing the new emphasis. The Federal Government sought to supply motivation six years later with the 1962 Amendments which greatly increased the ratio of Federal financial participation in the costs of services. This was done, however, by over-selling the Congress,

promising that the increased outlay of Federal funds for services and research projects would result in reduced caseloads. However, by 1970—eight years after increased Federal funds were brought into play to encourage the decreasing of dependency through “Services” and “Research”, such was not the case. On the contrary, all categories of public assistance except Aid to the Blind continued to increase in numbers and in cost, particularly the AFDC program. Realizing that public welfare administrators had failed to fulfill their bright promises of 1956 and 1962, the Congress in 1967 placed responsibility for job training and placement of recipients of public assistance in the hands of the Labor Department.

Between 1967 and 1970 public welfare administrators, in a last desperate

effort, reorganized their staffs into two groups; those providing services and those concerned with income-maintenance. This artificial division will not achieve the goal of markedly reducing dependency and completely loses sight of the fact that the greatest single service is to provide the needy recipient with a reasonably adequate amount of cash with which to purchase the necessities of life. So it is not surprising that the country today is moving rapidly away from public welfare grants and administration of public assistance toward some sort of guaranteed annual income for all Americans.

We ask this Committee to bear these facts in mind when it considers the whole question of social services as envisaged in the proposed title XX as an amendment to the Social Security Act.

REGIONAL CENTERS FOR DEAF-BLIND CHILDREN—A NEW HOPE

by

Robert Dantona

[Editor's Note: Mr. Dantona is Coordinator of Centers and Services for Deaf-Blind Children, Bureau of Education for the Handicapped, U. S. Office of Education.]

The rubella epidemic of 1964-65, as it swept across the nation, left a tragic toll upon an estimated 20,000 infants born with one or more of the following handicaps: cataracts, hearing defects, heart malformations, mental retardation, and brain damage. In addition, some 20,000 pregnancies were terminated in miscarriage or stillbirth.

The National Communicable Disease

Center in its June, 1969 *Rubella Surveillance Report*, estimated the economic cost for the nation's 20,000 children with congenital rubella syndrome for 1964-65, as \$919,912,000. This includes the following: more than \$28,000,000 in medical care; more than \$48,000,000 for institutional care; and more than \$742,000,000 in the area of special education.

Largely as a result of the 1964-65 epidemic and the perseverance of educators of deaf-blind children, Congress approved the Act, Public Law 90-247, Part C, which amends title VI of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, to develop comprehensive centers for deaf-blind children. President Johnson signed this Act on January 2, 1968 and in September of 1968, Congress appropriated \$1,000,000 for fiscal year 1969. By June 1, 1969 eight Regional Deaf-Blind Centers were funded at a cost of one million dollars. Three of these centers were developmental in nature and planned during their first year to develop specific programs to meet the needs of deaf-blind children in their area. Five of the centers were combined developmental/operational programs and were able to provide to some degree basic services for deaf-blind children.

In fiscal year 1970, two additional planning centers were funded. The remaining eight centers have all become developmental/operational and will soon begin their second year of activities. The ten centers will now serve and plan for the needs of deaf-blind children in all fifty states.

I. THE DEAF-BLIND CENTER CONCEPT

It is the intent of Congress, under this Act (P.L. 90-247), that the Deaf-Blind Center programs be

“designed to develop and bring to bear upon such children beginning as early as feasible in life, those specialized, intensive professional and allied services, methods, and aids that are found to be most effective to enable them to achieve their full

potential for communication with and adjustment to the world around them, for useful and meaningful participation in society, and for self-fulfillment.”

The deaf-blind child who will be the concern of our center programs is defined as a child who has both auditory and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational problems that he cannot properly be accommodated in special education programs developed solely for the hearing handicapped child or the visually handicapped child.

The Deaf-Blind Center concept is not to be thought of as the creation of a monolithic structure into which we pour all deaf-blind children. Rather, the center concept is administrative and organizational in nature—utilizing every available resource to provide services for all deaf-blind children.

Because of the breadth of services needed by deaf-blind children of all ages, and the scattered geographic distribution of these children, it is essential that a number of agencies, both public and private from every state concerned, join together in developing comprehensive regional center programs. All agencies involved in such cooperative work of the center are considered participating agencies. Those states which have voluntarily come together to develop a regional center program have designated a coordinating agency which is legally responsible for administering the center program under the grant and will also serve as the locus of the office of the coordinator of the center program.

II. DEAF-BLIND CENTER PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

A. The regional centers with the assistance of the participating agencies, will provide the following services:

1. comprehensive diagnostic and evaluative services for deaf-blind children;
2. a program for the adjustment, orientation, and education of deaf-blind children which integrates all the professional and allied services necessary therefor; and
3. effective consultative services for parents, teachers and others to play a direct role in the lives of deaf-blind children to enable them to understand the special problems of such children and to assist in the process of their adjustment, orientation, and education.

B. The deaf-blind centers will also plan and make provisions for the following activities in order to identify and meet the full range of special needs of deaf-blind children and their parents:

1. research
2. development or demonstration of new programs concerned with the education of deaf-blind children
3. inservice training of professional and allied personnel working with deaf-blind children
4. dissemination of materials and

information about practices found effective in working with deaf-blind children; work-shop proceedings, publications, movies, video tapes, etc.

III. DEAF-BLIND CENTER PLANNING AND OPERATIONAL GOALS

The following stratagems are fundamental to the successful planning and operations of all regional deaf-blind centers in order to meet the objectives detailed earlier.

1. Identification of deaf-blind population—We cannot begin to plan effectively in our regional center areas until we locate these children and identify their needs.

2. Identification of resources available—

a. Immediate resources which can provide specific programs for deaf-blind children

b. Potential resources which with some modification, perhaps by means of inservice training, may be adapted to include deaf-blind children in their program

3. Identification of children presently served—

a. Type of programs, their location and staffing in each program

b. What is the future potential of the resources identified, i.e., can they be expanded to include more children; what is required in way of staffing, training and construction, to expand services?

4. Identification of population not served--

a. This relates to the identification of potential resources (3b) and their expansion.

b. What new facilities must be constructed (day school, private, residential)?

5. Determine the economic cost factors relating to the development of programs for deaf-blind children and their parents--

a. Identification of population, resources, number of children served and not served

b. What are the manpower needs on a professional and paraprofessional level?

c. How many classrooms/facilities needed?

d. What kinds of programs are needed for the children, for staff training?

e. What are the construction needs?

6. Develop, expand and increase the number of facilities, programs, and services to provide and assure appropriate services for deaf-blind children--

7. Develop meaningful inservice training programs to improve and upgrade the status of staff in existing programs (especially those institutions for the retarded) to assist them in developing and providing greater opportunities through more meaningful programs

for our more severely disabled deaf-blind child.

8. Coordinate all community resources, i.e., medical, clinical, social, institutional, and educational, to provide services for more deaf-blind children and their parents. (Related to No. 2 identification of resources available)

9. Stimulate the development of teacher-training programs. Where feasible, viable relationships should be developed with such university training programs to provide a lifeline of trainees in deaf-blind center programs. (Develop more undergraduate programs modeled after the Michigan State University program.)

10. Coordinate all existing Federal resources to supplement the program needs of the centers, in addition to the identification of state and local resources for providing these services and for funding.

IV. CENTER SURVEY RESULTS

As of April 1970, 2,461 deaf-blind children have been located by our center surveys, which are still in process. More than fifty-four per cent of this number, or 1,332 children are under nine years of age. It should be understood that not all of the children located and suspected of being deaf-blind, have had the benefit of comprehensive diagnostic and evaluative services. One of the major objectives of the center program is to provide comprehensive diagnostic and evaluative services for *all* these children.

In the academic school year 1967-68, only two hundred fifty-six children were receiving adequate educational services--one hundred~ were in six residential programs for deaf-blind children. The remaining one hundred fifty-six were in programs for the deaf, the blind, public, and private school programs. In 1969-70, eight hundred two children were enrolled in educational programs. This leaves more than sixty-eight per cent of our surveyed population (or 1,600) without the benefit of adequate educational programs. Some three hundred forty-seven of these children are in institutions for the retarded, the remainder are at home.

The center programs, in their first year of operation evaluated one hundred sixty-one deaf-blind children. We hope in 1970-71 to evaluate more than four hundred children. However, the real challenge to be faced by the center program comes *after* the evaluation process is completed. Will we have sufficient number of programs with adequately trained staff for our children? Can we plan comprehensive programs to

meet the needs of all our deaf-blind children? The answers to these questions depend not only upon Federal assistance, but total local, State, and community involvement.

It is estimated that 4,000 deaf-blind children may have resulted from the 1964-65 rubella epidemics. These children will one day be adults, and will then become the responsibility of the National Center for Deaf-Blind Youth and Adults. We must work closely together to avoid the error of thinking which separates the world of education from the world of rehabilitation--as if they were two separate and distinct entities. It is essential for the future well-being of our deaf-blind children, that we consider their vocational needs early in their development.

To this end, I can assure you that the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped, will dedicate its energies along with State and local agencies, so that these children will live a more meaningful and fruitful life *in* this world, rather than *apart* from it.

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MONITOR MINIATURES

The October Monitor Miniatures contained a plea for certain back issues of *The Monitor* missing from the Federation files. The list omitted a good number of issues for which we have no Braille copies whatever. The issues needed are January 1965 through January 1969. Any readers willing to part with any of these issues should send them to 2652 Shasta Road,

Berkeley, California 94708.

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Confidence was the key word as the Capital Chapter, Washington, D. C., got in gear again after the summer slowdown. The main item of business at the September meeting was the election of

officers--or, as it turned out, their reelection.

George Reed, Nominations Committee Chairman, summed up everyone's opinion when he said, "Our current leaders have just taken us through one of the most productive years in the chapter's history. We'd all like to see this progress continue." Therefore, reelected to their respective offices were: president, Virginia Nagle; vice president, Tom Bickford; recording secretary, Virginia Bickford; corresponding secretary, Elizabeth Weston; treasurer, Kitty McNabb; Board Members, Hilda Mendenhall and Vernon Butler.

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The Illinois Congress of the Blind has instituted a quiz with a prize for the best answer each month on subjects drawn from *The Monitor*. The October question, drawn from the September issue, is "there are two opposing conceptions of the nature of blindness at large in the world.' What are these concepts as stated in *The Monitor*?" Winners of the prize are announced on the twentieth of each month.

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Most of us, at one time or another, have participated in some form of theatrical production. But, though the desire and talent may be great, our usual nemesis keeps blind people from achieving much in this field after high school. Alex Zazow, Capital Chapter, Washington D. C., is an exception. Working toward a degree in Russian at Georgetown University, Alex became interested in the school's drama group, "Mask and Bauble." In the fall of

1969, he auditioned for and got a part in the group's major presentation "Royal Hunt of the Sun." Alex played an old man who narrated the story. The production was chosen one of the ten best college efforts in the country. At the American College Theater Festival in May, the judges singled out Alex's performance for high praise, at the same time paying him the special compliment of omitting any reference to his blindness.

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All patrons of the Montana Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped are now able to call the Montana State Library. A WATS (Wide Area Telephone Service) line enables blind Montanans to call the Library at no cost. This is a service of the Montana State Library.

This telephone service is to be used for making requests, reporting difficulties with service, need for machine repairs, seeking reference information and asking for any other help from us which concerns library service.

Because of the great expense involved and because of a small staff, phone calls are limited to business purposes. Patrons are urged to make use of the service, but requested not to abuse it. At the end of one year an evaluation of this service to determine its value will be made.

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The most recent issue of the Ohio Council of the Blind *Bulletin* contains the following brief but thoughtful editorial: "Today, I pondered over the blind. Once we were viewed as street beggars. Later,

we were either musicians or religious novices. Rehabilitation started then; and we were taught piano tuning, chair caning, and broom-making. We were subjected to custodial care, because blindness meant retardation. No one listened to our pleas for recognition as men and women with a physical handicap. Step by step by step, over the past fifty years, through our own efforts, our condition has changed. The street beggar has almost disappeared. We still have musicians and religious novices, but the public views us in a different light. We still have piano tuning, chair caning and broom-making, but other occupations have been added. We still have custodial care, but the stranglehold is weakening; some are beginning to realize that we have brains, brains enough to fight for our human rights. The struggle is not over, but definite gains are being made. Where is the best place to observe these changes? At a National Convention. Here we see strong leadership. We find men and women engaged in all trades and professions. These individuals are true to their convictions. Here we see modern trends--women with makeup and mini-skirts, men with long hair and beards. These people are physically blind; they are mentally alert and possess an indomitable spirit. They are fighting for their human rights and they will win."

Grants totaling almost thirty million dollars help approximately 20,000 persons train for work in the education of handicapped children, according to an announcement by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The grants have been awarded to two hundred seventy public and private nonprofit institutions of higher education and to

State educational agencies in all fifty States. Anyone engaged in or preparing to engage in education for the handicapped is eligible to apply to a participating college, university, or state educational agency for a graduate fellowship or an undergraduate traineeship. These trainees will join approximately 124,000 specialists already working with the handicapped in expanding school programs. With less than half of the seven million handicapped pre-school and school age children in our country now receiving specialized educational assistance, these new traineeships will help to close the gap between the needs of the handicapped and existing services.

Bing Crosby will again head the annual Sight-Saving Campaign of the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness. Crosby commented on his reappointment, saying, "My concern for blindness prevention has increased greatly over the last year. The thought that half of the more than 34,000 Americans who will go blind in the next twelve months will do so needlessly is appalling."

The Overbrook School for the Blind announced that Dr. Mae Davidow, member of Overbrook's faculty and first woman to head the Pennsylvania Federation of the Blind, was recently awarded the Annual Achievement Award of Phi Delta Gamma, and was honored at the organization's national meeting in Lincoln, Nebraska. In a letter announcing the award, Dr. Davidow was acclaimed for her many outstanding contributions, and for "setting high standards for others to

follow." Dr. Davidow who is a member of the Iota Chapter at Temple University, was awarded the honor for both her achievements in the arts, and her services in teaching other teachers and students. Mae Davidow is a member of the Executive Committee of the National Federation of the Blind.

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The Southwest Regional Center for Deaf-Blind Children has been established in Sacramento, California, serving the geographic area of California, Arizona, Nevada, and Hawaii. The program is funded through the Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The primary objective of the center is to locate and identify deaf-blind children in these areas and concurrently to provide and make available comprehensive diagnostic and educational services for them.

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The Associated Blind of Greater Cumberland (Maryland) had a booth at the Cumberland Fairgrounds this summer, all of the wares exhibited having been made by blind persons. A fisherman's afghan was the *piece de resistance* made by Virginia Nagle, wife of the Chief of the NFB's Washington Office. Other exhibits displayed included pot holders and liquid embroidered pillowcases. Governor Mandel stopped by to see the booth when he visited the Fair and was much impressed.

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A new book of lessons on how to transcribe music into Braille will soon be available to persons certified in Literary

Braille through the Music Services Unit, Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, entitled "An Introduction to Braille Music Transcription" by Mary Turner De Garmo. This book is a detailed approach to the study of the basics of Braille music notation. Although the primary purpose of the book is to train transcribers, it is also designed to give resource teachers, parents, and others a more fundamental understanding of the Braille Music Code. Copies of the manual may be obtained by writing to the Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. 20542, Attention: Music Services Unit.

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On June 27th the Middle Tennessee Chapter of the NFB of Tennessee held its annual election of officers at the Noel Hotel in Nashville. The following officers were elected: Oscar Miller, president; Mrs. Mattie Bandy, first vice-president; Mrs. Yvonne Beaseley, second vice-president; Mrs. Mona Valdez, secretary; and James Utley, treasurer. Mrs. Sophia McCormick, Hubert Smith, and Mrs. Susie Seay were elected to the board of directors for one year terms. Three board members were appointed by the president. They were Bill Cole, Beatrice Nixon, and James Brown. Some of the officers and board members are new to the organized blind movement and some are Federationists of long-standing. The entire board promises to be an enthusiastic, hard-working group. Without question, the Middle Tennessee Chapter of the NFBT is going places in the months to follow.

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Associate Justice John M. Harlan of the United States Supreme Court has extremely poor eyesight and can read only if his eyes are almost on top of a piece of paper. Harlan, who is seventy-one, has one extra law clerk (he has three, the other Justices each have two) to read to him, and he turns out a great deal of work, Court sources say.

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Leo K. Searles, president of the Midwest Blind Bowling Association, distributed written information about bowling to all in attendance at the Minneapolis Convention of the National Federation of the Blind. The Association promotes and supervises the great sport of ten-pins. Those interested in receiving full details with respect to blind bowling league organization (especially in the States of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio, Iowa, Missouri, Illinois, and Indiana) should write to Leo K. Searles, 1704 Maryland Avenue, East, St. Paul, Minnesota 55106.

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Eye injuries resulting from the March 7 solar eclipse now number one hundred thirty-four cases, according to the survey of ophthalmologists and hospital emergency rooms conducted by the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness. California had twenty-two cases, the largest number among the States, and the eclipse was only thirty-five per cent total in California. Perhaps viewers misinterpreted the danger warnings as pertaining only to the sun in eclipse—when, of course, looking at the sun at any time can cause retinal burns. Of the one hundred thirty-four reported

cases, permanent partial vision impairment was suffered by seventy-six persons.

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John F. Nagle, Chief of the Washington Office of the NFB, sent the following telegram to the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Labor-HEW Appropriations of the U. S. Senate: "As a nation-wide organization of blind men and women, we urge committee approval of adequate funding for the National Center for Deaf-Blind youths and adults. Although the \$600,000 provided by the House of Representatives for operational expenses for this Center is sufficient, the two and one-half million dollars to be made available for building construction is half a million less than the amount needed because of constantly rising building costs. The difficulties of trying to function in a sight-and-sound-structured world without both sight and hearing are so devastatingly great that no effort or dollars should be denied this Center which will help these doubly disabled people to achieve the maximum measure of independence and self-sufficiency. This project should not be refused the additional \$500,000. With it the Center will be able to meet anticipated needs; without this extra insignificant amount, the Center may offer a false pledge of help, a promise falling far short of fulfillment. As blind people, we speak to you of and for the deaf-blind. These people already have the courage and are determined to help themselves. You must provide the needed-in-full amount for building and operating expenses for the Center, that courage may become developed skills and determination changed into bettered and more satisfying lives."

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The *Newsletter* of the Virginia Commission for the Visually Handicapped reports that the 1970 Virginia General Assembly passed a new regulation that will allow blind Virginians to make their own selection of whom they want to help them in a voting booth. As the law now reads, the assistance must be given by a precinct judge. Most voters would prefer a friend of their own choosing to mark their ballot or aid them in pushing the buttons.

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The monthly publication of the Illinois Congress of the Blind reports the exciting development of the organizing of the Shawnee Congress of the Blind, the first Chapter in Southern Illinois, located in Carbondale. The problems facing the blind of Southern Illinois appear to be, among others, lack of opportunities for employment, poor service from DVR, and denial of their basic rights as citizens in the voting booth. Hail to the Shawnee Congress of the Blind as it goes to work on these problems! Mrs. Robert Moeller was elected president.

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Recently a truck driver pleaded guilty in Justice Court in Bedford, Iowa to a charge of failure to yield the right-of-way to a blind man carrying a white cane. He was fined twenty-five dollars and costs. The truck struck the sixty-nine-year-old man as he was attempting to cross a street in downtown Bedford.

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Early in July Governor Ronald Reagan of California ordered welfare

program cutbacks reducing by twenty-five million dollars supplementary grants to meet special needs of 55,000 aged, blind, and disabled persons for attendant care and homemaker services. Two weeks later, in the face of a state-wide uproar and threatened court action, the Governor rescinded his orders for the cutbacks. However, he promised that he would return to the subject in the future.

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ABB's Twin Vision Division received an extensive writeup by William A. Horn entitled "To See and to Touch" in the August-September issue of *American Education*. The magazine is published by the U. S. Department of HEW.

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Reuben E. Olson, a retired steel man who lives in Gary, Indiana found, as he says "the rocking chair to be a lousy way of growing old." He bought a tape recorder, joined some tape clubs and was in business. Soon he was taping and making friendships all over the world. He now heads The Anselm World Tape Forum, which is sponsored by the Anselm Forum of Gary. As he puts it in his own inimitable way: "It's been an eye-opening experience to the sighted having intimate contact with the sightless. Blooey went the old stereotypes, like the blind standing on a busy street with tin cups and pencils to tempt an occasional plinking coin; that blindness merited pity-handicapped yes, but 'disabled' is a no-no word much despised; they learned that they want no hand-outs but the right to opportunity the same as all others." There is no doubt that Mr. Olson has Federation philosophy down pat. Those of you who would like to

join this world-wide lively tape group should write directly to: Reuben E. Olson, Director, Anselm World Tape Forum, 4456 Jackson Street, Gary, Indiana 46408.

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The Tennessee affiliate, NFB of Tennessee, now has a quarterly bulletin. The name of the new publication is *The Volunteer State News*. The new Tennessee bulletin is edited by Nellie Hargrove.

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Michael Wozniak, a blind youth from

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South Bend, Indiana, recently became an Eagle Scout. His culinary expertise, exhibited when he cooked a seven-course meal under wilderness conditions, hiking, and water exploration were among the activities which won him twenty-two merit badges.

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The American Foundation for the Blind, 15 West 16th Street, New York, N. Y. 10011, has just announced publication of its new catalog for aids and appliances.

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